OUT OF BONDAGE

CHRIST AND THE INDIAN VILLAGER

"A description of the position and an estimate of the prospects of Christian Missions, particularly in the villages of South India. Mr. Neill writes with candour as well as earnestness. He does not shrink from the problems confronting the missionary at the present day. . . But the conclusion is one of hope."

Times Literary Supplement.

STEPHEN NEILL

Price Two Shillings net

BOOKS FOR READING AND STUDY

The Shrine of a People's Soul.

By EDWIN W. SMITH.

A striking book on the literary work of the missionary.

Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; post free 2s. 9d.

"A book of fascinating interest, not only to those zealous for Christian missions, but to people interested in languages, in folk lore, in the habits and customs of aboriginal peoples, and in fact to anybody of any intelligence at all."

Liverpool Post and Mercury.

A Faith for the World.

By WILLIAM PATON.

Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; post free 2s. 10d.

"Among the books on the mission work of the Church published in recent years this work must be regarded as noteworthy."

Times Literary Supplement.

The Expansion of Islam: An Arab Religion in the Non-Arab World.

By W. WILSON CASH.

Cloth 3s. 6d. net; post free 3s. 10d.

"A subject of thrilling interest and vital importance. . . . Within his limits and for his purpose Mr. Cash has produced a book which merits attention and should find many readers."

Manchester Guardian.

Chinese Realities. By JOHN FOSTER.

Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; post free 2s. 10d.

"The author's intimate experience of conditions and needs in the south of China has unquestionably given to him the right to speak. The book is a masterly effort."—*Scots Observer.*

WHAT
IS OUR CHURCH
DOING IN INDIA?

Read -

"THE CANADIAN MISSION IN KANGRA"

by

Rev. C.R.H.Wilkinson

18 Illustrations

Contributions from some of our Missionaries -- and much interesting information about the country, the people and their customs.

PRICE - 35 cents each
$3.00 for 10 copies

LITERATURE DEPT. M.S.C.C.,
604 Jarvis St., TORONTO,5.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/outofbondage0000unse

OUT OF BONDAGE

CHRIST AND THE INDIAN VILLAGER

BY

STEPHEN NEILL

FORMERLY FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
which is Jesus Christ."

LONDON
EDINBURGH HOUSE PRESS
2 EATON GATE, S.W.I
1930

To

My Parents

who have made it impossible for their children to
think highly of anything in comparison
with the Cross of Christ

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY HEADLEY BROTHERS,
18, DEVONSHIRE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2 : AND ASHFORD, KENT.

FOREWORD

By the Bishop in Travancore and Cochin

It is somewhat of an accident that Travancore can claim any special relationship with this book. The author happened to be temporarily engaged on the staff of the Alwaye Union Christian College in North Travancore during the time that he was writing it. This connection cannot have helped much towards the writing of the book, since Travancore, while itself nothing but an extended village, lacks altogether, except in the South, villages properly so called, and therefore presents few of the characteristic features of ordinary Indian village life. Moreover, village life is not easily discerned through study windows. The book really owes its inspiration to the writer's experience, not in Travancore but in Tinnevelly, where, after acquiring the Tamil language, he moved familiarly during his first period of missionary service among the field-labourers and palmyra climbers of the Tinnevelly countryside.

Mr. Neill does not bring to his task the authority of age or of a long residence in India. Perhaps he could not have performed it so well, if he did. For long residence in any particular part of India might have imparted too local and provincial a colouring to his

picture; and with lapse of time there might have passed away that freshness of insight which often makes the newly arrived missionary a somewhat disturbing critic to his elders, but certainly enables him to see much both of what is and of what ought to be that is hidden from older eyes.

E. A. L. MOORE,
Bishop in Travancore and Cochin.

First Published May, 1930
Second Impression November, 1930

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

"THE life of India is in the villages." This elementary truth still needs to be repeated ten thousand times. We who live in the villages feel a kind of horror when chance constrains us to take part in the strange, hybrid life of the towns. When we read our daily papers, with their perpetual jangle of politics, we seem to enter an incredibly remote and unreal world. If there is any merit in this book, it is that I have tried to write all through from the point of view of the villager and not from that of the missionary.

One incurs many obligations in writing a book like this. In the main I have thought names and references undesirable, and have omitted them. But I must mention the Committee in London, which saw the book through the press and gallantly helped me in the ruthless task of reducing sixty thousand words to thirty-five thousand. Indians are a proud and sensitive people, and it is difficult to write truthfully of their country without giving pain. I am, therefore, especially indebted to Indian friends who have read these pages and guaranteed them as accurate for South India, and as far as their knowledge goes ; one is an experienced clergyman, others are students, who might be expected. if possible, to put their teacher in the wrong. No book

can deal with the whole of India; I have done my best to supplement my own experience by means of books and correspondence with other missionaries, and I hope that those who know other parts of India will find that at least the main outlines of the picture are correct for their field as well as for mine.

India has a strange power of winning the love of those who come to her to serve. I can hardly hope that I have made clear in these pages the reward which comes to those who work among the village folk of India, for the love of whom I have twice left the great College, which is the home of my spirit.

STEPHEN NEILL.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	Foreword by the Bishop in Travancore and Cochin	3
	Author's Preface	5
I.	The Indian Village	9
II.	The Religion of the Villager	21
III.	How the Gospel Comes to Them	35
IV.	Improving the Village	58
V.	The Village at School	72
VI.	Building on the Foundations	94
VII.	The Challenge of the Present Hour	117
	Bibliography	137
	Index	141

OUT OF BONDAGE

CHRIST AND THE INDIAN VILLAGER

CHAPTER I

The Indian Village

Our business here is with one-sixth of the human race. In the million square miles of country with which we have to deal, the diversities of climate and scene are so great as to make it difficult to say what an Indian village is. Far away in the North-west rise the great mountains where Kim walked with his Lama, and the little stone villages perched on stony platforms seem ever in imminent danger of crashing down to the valleys below. In some of the wilder parts of the jungle, men still build their huts high up among the trees, for fear of wild beasts. At the other end of India, in Travancore, a land where it is always afternoon, the traveller as he floats down the backwater, the banks of which are lined with leaf-thatched huts among the palms, might find it hard not to think himself in the South Seas of Conrad's vivid fancy.

Yet, when all has been said, there is a regular type of Indian village the same all over the land : a clump of trees, a cluster of houses, sometimes of stone, more

often of brick or mud, and all around the infinite dusty plain. It is impossible to stand in such a place without deep emotion ; here we touch the immemorial life of ancient races. How often the little huts have crumbled into dust ; fire and flood, armed enemies, pestilence, insect pests have come and gone and done their work ; but the unconquerable spirit of man has arisen again to build the village and till the fields. On this very spot, perhaps for thousands of years, has gone on the patient peasant life that survives almost unchanged to-day.

Truly India is a land devouring the peoples thereof. Time and again she has received the legions of the invaders ; but, as the centuries pass, Mother India has laid her strong, gentle hand upon them and conformed them to herself. The life of India is in the villages. The village is the unit on which the whole of the economic and social life of the country is built up. Through uncounted ages the village has been ruled by its *panchayat*, its council of five elders, who meet, perhaps on a raised platform under the great tree of the village, to exercise a censorship of morals, and to discuss all affairs of importance in the village's life. Because they know everything that goes on in the village and are always on the spot, their authority is great and their decisions nearly always respected. Then there is the village headman, who is a magistrate in a small way, and the intermediary between the government and the village. More important still, there is the *karnam*, who keeps those precious records of rights in

land which are, at the same time, the greatest achievement of the British government, the most precious possession of the villager, and the most frequent source of litigation. To remind us of the existence of these dignitaries there are in most villages a few large houses, standing out above the rest, comparatively spacious, often well-kept and clean, and very hospitable to the traveller.

But most of the village is made up of a very different type of house. A second story is rare ; most of the houses are low buildings of mud or sunburnt brick and thatch. In the yeoman class they are generally built round a small courtyard, and this is a great blessing to the womenfolk, who must spend most of their time indoors. One side of the courtyard is given up to the animal members of the family ; "the ox knoweth his master's crib," and it is no uncommon sight to see a cow, quite unaccompanied, trip nimbly up a steep flight of steps and in at her master's door. Outside, there is usually a narrow veranda giving on the street, where the men can sit and survey the world during the day, and sleep at night. Here we are at the very heart of India's life. There are millions of such houses in the country. The master of the house is the owner of a small piece of land—two or three acres, a couple of wells, and a pair of bulls to work it. The work is hard and hazardous ; he never does much more than make both ends meet, and has not much opportunity of improving his position except perhaps by buying another plot of land in a good year. But he is the

most stable element in society. Though poor, he is proud—proud of his caste, proud of his village, proud of his own position as a landowner and a pillar of society. The problem of his redemption, social and religious, is the real problem of India to-day.

But we have not yet finished our survey of the village. The sense of smell, if nothing else, will soon tell us of the presence of the outcastes in their tumble-down habitations outside the village boundaries. We must be clear what is meant by the outcastes. It is not that the Hindu social system takes no account of them. The Hindu scheme is all-inclusive, and fixes for all their place in life.[1] It is based on the principle of mutual service and privilege, but on some, either because the services they must render are degrading, or because their habits and persons are filthy, the burden of service presses crushingly, and the privileges are hardly noticeable. The outcastes may not enter the village ; from birth to death it is their lot to toil and starve, to fawn and cringe for bread, to tremble at the caprice of all-powerful masters. They are debarred from the use of the village tank and the village well. If one of them should speak to a high caste man he must speak with his hand over his mouth, lest his breath should defile. The contempt of others has brought them to degradation. Drink and the eating of unclean food, unwashen filth, and disease keep them trembling perpetually on the border line between life and death.

[1] See also pp. 18-20.

But we must not think of the outcaste as wholly degraded. He keeps alight in his mind a tradition of better days when his ancestors were rulers of the land. Almost certainly he is right; he comes of a primeval race that was living and ruling in India before ever the first Aryan descended from the Hindukush. His masters recognize it; in some parts the outcaste alone is set to the eerie task of watching the fields at night, because he has influence with the old, old gods of the jungle, who have been driven out by the plough and resent the presence of an alien peasantry in their domain. To this day the pariah's village is his sanctuary; he may not trespass on the Brahmin, but neither may the Brahmin trespass on him; the Brahmin who enters the outcaste quarter is liable to be driven out with contumely and violence.

So much for the plains. But a great part of the surface of India is hill and forest, and here we meet a wholly different class of inhabitant. The census gives ninety-five names of hill-tribes, and estimates a population of fifteen millions. Many of these are broken fragments of peoples, driven further and further back into the jungle by the expansion of stronger races. But among them are the three great races of the Gonds, Bhils, and Santals,[1] who have never been conquered, and have among them traditions, not unsupported by archæological evidence, of ancient royalty and

[1] Gonds (2¼ millions) mainly in the Central Provinces.
Bhils (1½ millions) mainly in the Bombay Presidency.
Santals (2 millions) mainly in Bengal.

dominion. "When a Rajput chief succeeds to the throne, his brow is marked with the blood drawn from the toe or thumb of a Bhil, by which he secures blood brotherhood with the early lords of the country, and the protection of their priesthood against local evil spirits."

On the fringes of the plains, these peoples have been much affected by contact with civilization, but in their mountain fastnesses they keep the old primitive forest life. Because of their methods of agriculture they are the sworn enemies of the forest department. Their practice is to burn down a part of the forest and grow crops for a year or two in the immensely rich virgin soil; then, as the rudely tilled land begins to lose its fertility, they move on and repeat the devastation elsewhere. Like most simple people in touch with nature they have a reputation for second-sight, and are in great request as sorcerers and fortune tellers. They trade with the people of the plains in beeswax and honey, in herbs and medicinal roots and other products of the jungle. Sometimes the fowler finds another means of increasing his income: he will take his day's catch of birds to the house of a rich Jain, whose creed most strictly demands that he should not kill nor suffer the death of any living creature; there he will offer either to kill the birds or to allow the Jain to redeem them, well knowing that the stringencies of the latter's creed will overcome the stringencies of his pocket!

To complete our survey, we must go one step lower

still and include the criminal and nomad tribes, whose number is given as nearly ten millions.

We are not dealing here merely with sporadic crime. It is true that India is still very far from being a law-abiding country. The forces of law and order are steadily gaining ground, but the police force is still too much associated in the minds of ordinary people with extortion and torture[1] to secure for it the co-operation of all right-minded people in the detection of crime. There are many in India who fall into a life of violent crime "for adventure or from revenge or because of adverse financial circumstances or out of sheer desire to get easy money." At times armed robbery becomes so prevalent that special detachments have to be set apart to deal with it, and the reduction of the robbers is only effected after something like a pitched battle.

But besides this ebb and flow of crime, there are whole tribes and communities which are brought up to regard crime as the main business of the day. Some of the wandering tribes are comparatively respectable : the cattle-drivers who were a familiar feature of life fifty years ago, but are being driven out of work by the spread of cultivation ; the stone-breaker and earth-work builders of the South, fine sturdy men who wander

[1] The remark in *India in 1927-8*, p. 330, that "a case of actual torture by the police is almost certain to be detected and punished" is simply official blarney. But English and Indian alike may be proud of the fact that "during the year 1927-28, no fewer than thirty-four policemen laid down their lives in the performance of their duty, while two hundred and sixty-eight suffered wounds or other injuries."

from place to place in search of work, and are wonderfully skilful in their hereditary calling. But other communities have really no livelihood except crime; they may do a little basket-making and fortune-telling, but thieving is their main, sometimes their only, source of income. The criminal often does not think it wrong to steal, it is a case of his wits against the wits of the community, and he takes a legitimate pride in a daring and successful *coup*. As the country grows more settled, the state of these people often becomes very miserable; every man's hand is against them, and the powers of the law press even more hardly upon them. A group of them came not long ago to a Christian worker and pleaded, "We want your help. These villagers tie us up to pillars and posts and thrash us almost every week, the police are always on our heels, jail seems to be our home. Is there no way out for us?"

We started this chapter with a glance backwards into the remote depths of the village's past. It now remains to detail some of the principal factors that are breaking up the old stagnant life of the villages, and introducing in a year more changes than used to be seen in a whole century.

First and foremost come the wonderful facilities for travel which open before the Indian peasant to-day. Even a few years ago it was possible to find many who had never been as much as ten miles from their own door, and to whom a journey into the market town three miles away was quite an adventure. Last year,

the Indian railways carried more than six hundred million passengers. Travelling third class in India, though not comfortable, is a very interesting experience. You buy your ticket, less than a farthing a mile —London to Edinburgh and back for less than a sovereign—and then you find what place you can in the crowded swaying train. It is all very democratic; Brahmin and landholder and outcaste, if they have bought their tickets, have equal right of place, and must needs rub shoulders in the jostling crowd. There is no difficulty at all in finding out where they are going, they are only too ready to talk. Some are merely going to visit relations, or to a wedding, many are off to the tea estates in the hills in search of work. But the greatest cause for travel is pilgrimage to sacred places. Many of the pilgrimage places in South India are in lovely sites by the seaside or in green, rainbowed valleys among the hills. Here at festival times congregate shop-keepers and jugglers, and, nowadays, cinemas; and, apart from strictly religious duties, there is plenty of time for entertainment, for making new friends and meeting old ones. There are great abuses connected with the festivals, but, on the whole, the Indian family after its annual pilgrimage comes back, like the English middle-class family after its annual holiday at the sea, a great deal better for the change.

But even more pervasive than the railway is the motor bus. Railways are comparatively few, and there are still many places fifty miles and more from a station,

but the buses go everywhere. In many parts there is almost a fever of road-building, and the moment a road is completed there will be three or four firms running buses along it. Cut-throat competition will bring the fares down within reach of the very poorest, and it will not be long before it is impossible to find anyone in the country who has never been in a motor bus. It is now just becoming fashionable to have, if possible, a motor for your daughter's wedding; and that brings the works of Mr. Henry Ford crashing over the most appalling roads into the village itself.

We shall have occasion to deal elsewhere with the effect of education and of western mechanism on village life. We may mention one other force which has been very potent in the last few years—the War. A million men, mostly from the Punjab, saw service in the army, many of them outside India, and all came back to their villages with a new sense of dignity and of the wideness of the world. Many men had been in France, and had seen with their own eyes what thrift and hard work and resourcefulness can make of village life, and came back with a deep dissatisfaction with the condition of things as they are in their own villages.

But all outward changes only thinly veil the far more significant fact that contact with the West is undermining the traditions of the Indian mind, and breaking up the very foundations of Indian society. The whole life of Hindu India is based on the idea of caste. There are more than two thousand castes, of the most various origin, in the census lists. The caste into which a man

is born determines for good and all his position in the social scale. To an extent unthinkable to a European it settles every detail of his personal life. It settles the forms of his speech, his diet, his personal relations, his profession, his marriage, his funeral, the gods he must worship and the duties he must perform. Over all is cast the sanction of religion ; the caste into which a man is born in this life is the just reward of his actions in a previous birth ; if when he is born again into the world he would be born in a higher caste, he must earn merit by the exact performance of his *dharma*, his caste-duty. He must not fall below it, neither may he presume, even if he is but a sweeper, to rise above it.

It is easy to see the harm which caste has wrought. It has divided up the country into an infinity of water-tight compartments ; it has postponed national unity, and hindered national efficiency ; it has led some to inordinate pride and others to abject subjection ; it has penalized individual initiative and laid heavily on men's necks the yoke of fatalism. But it would be wrong to imagine that caste is wholly evil. It is certain that in Christian communities which have suddenly broken away from all the restraints of caste, moral standards are sometimes lower than among their non-Christian neighbours. There is, in caste, in some degree at least, the sense of *noblesse oblige ;* every caste-man is the censor of the morals of all his fellows, and any breach of caste decorum is visited with the heaviest penalties. Sometimes the regulations are trivial and only vaguely connected with ethics, but

caste has stood in the main for discipline and for the subordination of self to the community.

But now caste has had its day, and its reign is visibly coming to an end. Every day one can read of denunciations of " untouchability " and the repression of the outcastes from the lips of Hindus from Mr. Gandhi downwards. It is the declared policy of the government in every province and in many states to help forward the backward classes, and to-day the son of the village barber or the landless labourer can indulge ambitions which need not stop short of the highest distinction. Every government service, every profession, is recruited from many castes, and very often from village homes. The changes that are being brought about are far deeper and greater than any mere political ferment. India is in the travail pangs of a new age. It is for the Christian Church to decide what part it will play in the bringing to birth of the new India that is to be.

CHAPTER II

The Religion of the Villager

It is a strange world that we enter when we try to penetrate the mind of the villager. What is he thinking of as he drives his bullocks backwards and forwards, up and down the inclined ramp of his well? The answer may be "Nothing at all." Yet it is very certain that his mind is not a vacancy; it is full of queer ideas of his own, held together by a perverse, fanciful logic quite different from the sober thought of educated people. There is a medley of tales and customs and experiences, leading to the half-light world of superstition in which his religion mostly dwells. We sometimes talk of the simplicity of village life; it is true that it has an outward simplicity due to its freedom from the complicated machinery of modern life; but inner simplicity is the last thing for which we should look in the village. We are dealing with confused masses of unregulated and unmastered experiences; when Christ comes in, He comes to bring the simplicity of thought which is the work of His spirit and of nothing else; it is His word that commands light out of darkness, order out of chaos.

It is not easy, even for those who know the language well, to learn much about the village mind. Villagers

who have become Christians, when questioned, usually just answer, " Oh, it is their custom " ; they do not like to show a knowledge of the old superstitions which they have left. Even the non-Christians know something of the way in which educated people regard their beliefs and ceremonies, and are shy of speaking frankly about them. But there is a still more potent cause which seals their lips. A famous scholar once spent a year in India studying the customs of a hill-tribe ; he had just succeeded in winning their confidence, and the bolder spirits were beginning to tell him the inner things which he most wanted to find out, when misfortune after misfortune befel his best informants : the buffaloes of one died, sickness visited the house of another, and so forth—clear evidence to the simple mind of the wrath of the gods against those who had betrayed their secrets. But the most insuperable obstacle of all is the difficulty which the student experiences in adjusting his educated outlook to the view-point of the man with whom he has to do.

The first form of village worship which we are likely to observe is that of the orthodox Hindu gods at the village shrine. In every Hindu village where there are caste-people living, there is certain to be a little temple of one of the gods—it may be Vishnu, or his incarnation Krishna, or Rama the hero of the great epic ; in the south it is more likely to be Siva the destroyer, or his son Ganesa, the placid elephant-headed god. Here daily worship will be carried out ; we are likely to be awakened in the early morning by the weird sound of

the conch-shell, blown to wake the god; we may be allowed to watch from a distance while the Brahmin officiant, to the ringing of bells and the burning of incense, bathes and dresses and feeds the god. This is for the most part a gentle, kindly religion. No animal sacrifice is offered.

Not gold, not blood their altar dowers,
But votive tears and festal flowers.

The offerings are "pure" offerings, flowers and rice and clarified butter. There is no doubt that many villagers feel a real affection for their local god; his presence in the village is a kind of assurance of divine protection.

But there is another and darker side to village religion. We go a little further, and beyond the village we may expect to find a shrine which has every appearance of being deserted. Outside stands a group of horses roughly modelled in clay or wood, within is an image often of commanding size and terrifying aspect. This is the shrine of Aiyenar, the guardian, who is supposed at night to ride round the village and its fields on his horses, and, if in good humour, to protect it. We are unlikely to find any sign of recent offering, or any single worshipper, because the god is never worshipped in our sense of the word; he is only propitiated in emergencies. Aiyenar is only the best of an unnumbered army of gods and demons, vaguely conceived, capricious, able when they are angry to do infinite harm, and to be propitiated on occasions with

weird rites and bloody sacrifices. It is this element of fear which clearly distinguishes this form of religion from the higher forms ; it can hardly be imagined to contain any element of affection.

Fear of evil spirits is a constant factor in the life of the villager. One observer in the far North writes :

> When the last ray of light leaves the forest . . . men, women and children huddle together inside their fast-closed huts, in mortal dread of those ghostly beings, more savage and cruel than the leopards, tigers and bears that now patrol about for their prey.

Another in the extreme South tells us that the evil spirits " lurk everywhere, on the tops of palmyra trees, in caves and rocks, in ravines and chasms. They fly about in the air, like birds of prey, ready to pounce down on any unprotected victim, and the villagers pass their life in constant dread of these invisible enemies."

Who are these evil spirits ? There seems to be no doubt that they are in part the product of that awe which falls on the spirit of man in lonely places ; the bare heights of the hills, the thick glades of the forest, the empty spaces of the jungle, are tenanted by mysterious inhabitants. If a new patch of ground is being cleared for cultivation, a small clump of trees must be left standing, otherwise there will be no refuge for the tree spirits which will be expelled.

Then there is the fear of the abnormal in nature and in man's life. Above all, to the primitive mind disease and death are not " natural " happenings—they

are always due to the action of malign spirits. If a man is sick, the sorcerer is first called in to expel the demon that has taken possession of him. Medicine can have no effect until the demon has been driven out. When a man has small-pox he is believed to be possessed by Sitala Devi, the small-pox goddess; everything about him at once becomes sacred, anyone who enters the house where he is lying must take off his shoes and wash his feet as though he were entering a temple. But the goddess, though greatly feared, is not a welcome visitant, and steps are at once taken to get rid of her. In one district a little cart is constructed and on it are placed a grain of rice for every soul in the village, and various little offerings such as knives, pots and so forth. The cart is then secretly dragged to the boundary and left in the fields of the next village. Those who find it and know what it brings naturally hasten to pass it on to their neighbours; and so the goddess may be conducted through a whole series of villages, until a lonely place is found in which the cart may safely be abandoned.

But the constant source from which the armies of the demons are recruited is from human ghosts. In almost every village there is some old crone who is a noted story-teller, and almost all her most exciting stories are stories of ghosts; after a visit to her the children will not walk home alone. There are comparatively few people in the village who have not seen ghosts. You may know the ghosts when you see them by two infallible signs: they walk very rapidly, and

their feet do not touch the ground. Outside many shrines you will find posts for the ghosts to rest on if they come that way. Also, they talk very much through their noses ; " goblin speech " is what the old Aryan invaders called the unintelligible speech of the aborigines whom they conquered.

The ghosts of those who die a natural death are easily dealt with. The dead man becomes one of the family gods ; at intervals he will be worshipped, and offerings of food will be made to him ; these will secure him certain life and happiness in the other world, and will at any rate prevent his coming back to this world to trouble his relations. But the spirits of those who are murdered, or who commit suicide or die a violent death, leave the world angry and vengeful and will be very dangerous unless properly attended to. One way of attending to them is to placate them with reverence and offerings. One day, just outside our village, we find a shrine where there certainly was no shrine before. It is simply a small stone set upright, daubed with red lead and with a little garland of flowers tied round it. We make enquiries, and learn with regret that the son of one of our friends yesterday climbed a palmyra tree, the spathe on which he was standing broke, and he fell to the ground and was killed. Now this is his little shrine, and he will be worshipped here, in the very place where he fell. One of the favourite gods in Central India is Dulha Deo. He was a child bridegroom who was carried off by a tiger while on his way to the wedding. So even now at weddings a little coat, a pair

of shoes and a bridal crown are offered to Dulha Deo to avert his angry glare, and sometimes even a model swing, on which the child may amuse himself.

But there are some spirits which are too angry to be propitiated, and sterner measures must be taken to prevent them from doing harm. Worst of all is the Churel, the spirit of a woman who has died in childbirth. She walks at night in the form of a beautiful woman, and may be known by the fact that her feet are turned back to front. All kinds of steps are taken to prevent such a woman walking: nails are driven into the fingers of the corpse, bones are broken, the body is buried deep in the earth with thorns about it. As the mourners return home they sprinkle mustard seed all along the way, saying as they go, "When you try to return home, pick up all these."

Bishop Heber wrote,

The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

but it is not true. No man in his senses bows down to wood and stone. The image to which the heathen bows down he believes to be very much alive; in fact, an image is not worshipped until a ceremony called "the importation of life" has been performed upon it. The priest touches the image in all its limbs, and finally breathes into its mouth saying, "Let the soul of [the god intended] long continue in happiness in this image." A friend of mine who is a magistrate once had to decide in court whether an

image was a god or not ; the delicacy of the situation lay in the fact that the image, which was of gold, would, if not a god, be distrained to help to pay its owner's debts.

The villager has much evidence in favour of his belief in the power of the idol. Many tales are told of the harm which has come to those, even Europeans, who have ventured to touch or injure idols and shrines ; and the word "coincidence" is not included in the village vocabulary. But the most striking and, to him, irrefragable evidence is that supplied by the phenomena of demoniac possession.

In almost every village there is some man who is known as a devil-dancer. To the monotonous beating of a drum the aspirant leaps and dances before the image of his god, exactly like the priests of Baal, lashing himself to frenzy with a rope or chain, and even cutting himself with knives and lancets. At last the afflatus falls, the god takes possession, the man speaks with another voice. Now he is worshipped as the god incarnate, he is consulted as an oracle, and the greatest reverence is paid to his lightest word.[1]

But besides this sought possession, there is a chance

[1] While this chapter was being revised for the press a convert boy came in who corroborated this account in detail ; he was most emphatic as to the genuineness of the powers possessed by the devil-dancers. "Things do happen exactly as they say." I should not like to dogmatise, but I do not suppose that any village missionary doubts the possibilities of the invasion of the human spirit by hostile powers from without. It is certain that when we touch idolatry, and especially devil-dancing, we are touching bottomless evil.

possession to which women are specially subject, and which is greatly feared. A missionary in camp, roused by a great commotion outside, went out to find a Christian woman surrounded by a crowd, and being most severely beaten. He tried to intervene, but was told, " We are beating the devil, and must go on until he comes out." The sign of his coming out was to be that the victim would lift a large stone which, in her normal state, she could hardly move, and carry it to the idol temple half a mile away across the fields. It seemed impossible, yet in a few minutes the frail exhausted woman lifted the stone, carried it at full speed and cast it into the temple, and was then cured. " Yes," said two Hindu women sitting by, " that is what we always do to drive out the devil "—with the implication, " You Christians ought not to use our Hindu methods."

It is but a short step from devil-dancing to magic. The idea of the one is to put yourself wholly under the power of the spirit, of the other to get the spirit under your power and make him do your will. Magic in all its forms, black and white, is rife in every part of India. Here is a description given by an eye-witness of a powerful rain magic : " A doll is made of straw in the image of a man, and is then taken round the village, street by street, in mock funeral procession ; drums are beaten before it, and its mouth is filled with betel. Ten men or so cry out, ' The evil sinner is dead, the wicked sinner is dead.' The doll is thrown out of the village, and either buried or burnt. Many believe that if this ceremony is performed rain will fall in, at the

most, four days." But if magic can be used to produce rain, it can equally well be used to prevent it; it is always to the interest of some people, e.g. the grain-sellers, that rain should fail. It is devoutly believed that if some mischievous person buries a pot in the ground, just under the angle of a roof, so that the rain water will run off the roof on to it, the rain will certainly be stayed.

This type of magic is comparatively harmless; those which are terrible lie not far off. Most magicians in India profess to be able to kill a victim at a distance, and the most potent spells of all are those which require a human victim for their efficacy. Up till about seventy years ago, there was a tribe which regularly offered an annual human sacrifice to secure the fertility of their fields. The victim was bought for money and treated quite kindly until the day of his death; then he was tied to a post and literally hacked to pieces by the tribesmen, who would fight with one another to secure fragments of the flesh to bury in their fields. Even while this book was being written, two men were sentenced to transportation for life for the murder of a child in circumstances which seemed to indicate that they had offered it as a human sacrifice to win for themselves magical powers.

If a living victim cannot be secured, the next best thing is to get some part of a human body. The skull of a first-born child is supposed to be specially effective; should a mother lose her first baby, the body will be buried if possible in the courtyard of the house and,

on dark nights, the folk will lie trembling lest a sorcerer come to desecrate the grave.[1]

The mind of the villager is full of grave fears and anxieties as to the powers which are loose in the world and may work to his hurt. When a Hindu is born the astrologer is at once called in to cast his horoscope, and so to determine in part at least his future destiny. If a wedding is to be arranged the astrologer must fix the lucky day and lucky hour. Even Christians are not free from such ideas ; any Indian clergyman can tell tales of the desperately ingenious delays devised by his parishioners, in order that a wedding which he has fixed for eight o'clock should not take place until after midday, which the astrologer has fixed as the auspicious time. Every action of life may at any moment be delayed by unfavourable omens. Here is a random selection, from S. India, of the omens which must be observed by a man starting on a journey. It is a favourable omen if he should see, at starting, a married woman, two Brahmins, an umbrella, a cow, two fishes, an elephant, a black monkey, a dog, a parrot, honey ; but he must turn back if he should see a widow, a smoky fire, a hare, a blind man, a tiger, a dog barking on a housetop, a quarrel, an oilman or a beggar.

Where in the world, in all this farrago of evil and triviality and sheer unreason, are we to find anything that we can turn to the service of our work ? Where

[1] Between the writing and the revision of this chapter I actually saw such a grave dug. When I asked why the child was to be buried there, the answer simply was " her first-born child," and I was expected to know what that implied.

in all this shifting sand can we find any foundation on which to build the house of God? Patience and sympathy will show that even here God has not left Himself without witness, and that in the village mind there are elements which we can take over and turn to the truth.

First, there is the sense of the one Supreme God, which appears never to be wholly absent in any people, however low in the scale of human life. This is occasionally denied—"they appear to have no deities, and no knowledge of the Supreme Being," writes an observer of one tribe; but when such statements have been made, fuller knowledge nearly always leads to their being withdrawn. The idea may be vague and dim in the extreme, and yet it is always there, that God exists, that God is one, that He is somehow behind all this clustering throng of lesser deities and spirits. *They* are malicious and must be kept in good temper by offerings, but God is kindly and beneficent, sending His rain on the just and on the unjust; He need not be propitiated, and, as for worship, He is too high and far away to be worshipped by poor people like us. So the Supreme has no temple and no offering. This is how it appears to the villager: "Suppose we have a petition to the Collector, shall we be able to go into his presence? You see, there will be many clerks and servants about his house, and we shall bribe one of them to do our business. So we know that God is, but we worship one of the gods that are near us, and are like His servants, and they will do our business." "But

suppose," we reply, "that the Collector should call you into his presence?" "Oh, then . . ." This is a new thought and takes some time to assimilate; even then its application to God the Father does not immediately appear. But the thought is there, even sometimes in the most ignorant. "Do you ever go to any temple to worship?" we asked an outcaste man. "No, we should not be admitted; we have nobody but God," and he pointed upwards. "Do you pray to Him?" "Yes, we know nothing, but we cry out 'O God, O God!'"

Second, there is the universal fact of conscience. Perhaps the first thing which strikes the villager about Christians is that they are people who are expected to live better than their neighbours, not to lie and steal and drink. But even in the old religion, though it contains so much of evil, there are moral sanctions. In some places the tedium and expense of a civil suit in the courts is avoided by having recourse to the temple of some god renowned as the guardian of the truth; an oath is taken before the idol, and this it is believed will never be broken, for no man would dare to risk the wrath of the gods. Sometimes a lamp is lighted ritually in the shrine in confirmation of the oath.

Some would add as evidence the practice of sacrifice; but this is much more doubtful. In the village religion sacrifice is simply the propitiation of a capricious and vengeful deity. There is no thought of a certain known sin which must be expiated, no idea of a broken relationship with a loving and holy God. "Misfortune has

come, the spirit is angry, we must give something that we value that the wrath may pass away." This is very precarious ground as a foundation for teaching about the death of Christ ; it may lead the villager to the idea of just such another immoral compact, by means of which God can be bought off and led to deliver us from the just consequences of our sins.

Much more certain is man's natural craving after life beyond this life. The villager lives ever in conflict with nature, ever above the inscrutable and awful precipice of death ; yet his thoughts of another world are of the dimmest, scarcely tinged at all with hope. "Naked he came," he sings of the dead, "and naked has gone. This dwelling place belongs neither to you nor to me, to the life that is gone." Nothing perhaps impresses him so deeply as a true Christian burial, with its absence of demonstrative grief, the quiet accents of peace, perhaps even of triumph. It is with amazed consolation that he learns that, should he himself fall, "underneath are the everlasting arms," that Christ has conquered death ; and that he can, if he will, become a citizen of the New Jerusalem, the city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

CHAPTER III

How the Gospel Comes to Them

THERE are about three hundred and twenty million people in India. According to the recently completed Survey of the Languages of India, they speak no less than a hundred and seventy-nine languages and five hundred and forty-four dialects ranging from the great literary languages—Bengali, Marathi, Tamil—down to dialects spoken only by a few hundreds and never yet reduced to writing. To all of these it is commanded that the Gospel should be preached. How do we set to work ?

When Christ sent out His disciples, He sent them first to heal and then to preach. In all our evangelistic work, we must give the doctor pride of place. Home supporters so often think of the medical mission as a kind of charitable appendix to missionary work that it is necessary to labour the point ; the doctor is the strongest, and in some districts the only, evangelistic agency which the mission can use.

Let us follow the medical missionary and his Indian fellow-workers on a visit to an out-station. We start before daybreak, and as the mission bus rolls up to the rendezvous, we begin to wonder what the missionary has in mind ; all that is visible is a clump of trees and

a small group of mud huts. But he has made no mistake. Already a number of people are sitting under the trees; bullock carts are bumping over the field paths, and begin to form a kind of laager outside the village, and people are streaming in twos and threes through the fields. By the time that the medicines and bandages have been unpacked in the little house which serves as consulting-room, operating theatre and refectory, quite a large crowd has assembled for the preaching, with which, punctually at eight o'clock, the day's work will begin. A ticket is given to each one present, which serves as his passport to the dispensary (which is no more than a large tree!); and for twenty minutes or so a catechist or the doctor himself proclaims the way of healing for soul as well as body. Then the work begins. Some are hospital cases, who, if they can be persuaded, will be taken back to hospital in the bus; but dispensary work in India consists largely in dealing with simple conditions, repeated over and over again: malaria, indigestion, rheumatism, and a great deal of minor surgery—boils and abscesses, thorns and splinters, and many strange objects in children's ears and noses. The doctors have seen all these things hundreds of times before, and know exactly what to do; they work with lightning rapidity, though not too quickly for care and gentleness, and the compounders are kept flying at their tables. In the meantime, a second group has collected for preaching; and the catechists use every spare minute moving about among the people, making friends and answering

innumerable questions about the doctor and his ways. When at last, some time after mid-day, the last patient has been treated, and tiffin is ready, nearly three hundred names have been added to the book.

But even now there is no time for delay. Groups of people will be waiting at several points on the road, and must be attended to. Here is a pathetic group standing by the wayside; the father is a leper, the mother is blind, and now she has brought her only son to the doctor. "Oh, we are so glad you have come. We came last week, but you had already passed by." The doctor examines the eyes of the baby and finds utter tragedy—the sight of both eyes absolutely and hopelessly gone. "What is it? Why do you not speak to me about my son, my baby boy?" Gradually the truth sinks into the mother's mind. "If we had been in time last week, could you have saved my baby's eyes?" The doctor knows in truth that, if it had been possible to treat those eyes a week earlier, they could have been saved.

What has been accomplished? The mission books show the bare fact that about four hundred people have been treated, and so much pain has been relieved; they have come from about a hundred villages, scattered over two hundred square miles of country, most of them as yet unvisited by anyone connected with the mission. But how much more there is in it than that. Each of these people has heard something, perhaps for the first time, of the love of Christ; they have seen the

missionary and begun to trust him. As they come again, still more if some of them are brought into the hospital and spend some days in that atmosphere of loving gentleness, they are bound to ask themselves what is at the root of all this love and service, and so be pointed to Him whose name is love. When the catechists go out into the villages to preach, instead of being met by the old stolid indifference they are likely to find themselves among old friends, warmly greeted, and given the best place in the village for their work.

The evangelist goes out to seek his audience—he may find it hostile, or careless or even non-existent. The medical missionary, once he has won the confidence of the people, can just sit still and let the people come to him. They will come in by hundreds, bringing their relations and friends, and at the dispensary they will have leisure and good-will and a predisposition to listen and learn the good words which are being spoken.

Some people think that in India the Government is giving all, or almost all, that could be required in the way of medical aid. This is very far from being the case. One very well qualified to know said recently in public that the government hospitals are touching only the fringe of the need and suffering of the villages. It is specially on the women's side that the need is greatest. The last official figures reveal the amazing fact that Christian missions have, in India, more hospitals for women than the government and all other private agencies combined. Yet, even now, there is only about one hospital per million of India's women,

and the majority of those are in the great cities. What it means to live and bear children in a land where helps are so few and dangers so many, can only be dimly imagined by those who do not know.

On the philanthropic side, the claim of India for medical missions is unanswerable. On the evangelistic side it is stronger still. In every district there are whole classes which are utterly untouched by the ordinary means of spreading the Gospel. It is the doctor alone who can penetrate the zenanas of the Moslem women, and win a way into the hearts of the rich and orthodox, who will have no touch with Christianity in any other form. Medical work is essential to any full presentation of the Gospel. It shows forth the love of God in a way that all can understand. What is wanted is not so much the great city hospitals, with X-rays and every kind of modern equipment, as the little village hospital, with few beds and with the simplest necessaries ; where efficiency will depend on the keenness and loyalty of all concerned and not on material resources. The doctor who engages in medical work in India is likely to find himself asked to make the hardest of all sacrifices, that of his professional pride and of his professional ambition.

But not every one can be a doctor ; nor can the doctor reach everyone in this great country. Our commission is to every creature ; and the only way to reach them all is by itinerant preaching, " the foolishness of preaching." There is, among all forms of missionary work, none more exhausting, none which

requires better mental equipment, than the work of the itinerant preacher.

The alarm goes at 4 a.m. Indians are an early-rising folk, and if we want to catch them before they set out to work, we must be on the move before earliest dawn. The walk in the darkness is usually a time of conflicting emotions. We are weighed down by weariness, and a sense of gloom and hopelessness. We have done it so often before and so little seems to come of it. Yet there struggles through a sense of divine commission and of inner peace as we try to lift up our hearts to the throne of Glory on behalf of those to whom the word is to be preached. Some anxiety, too—for a village preaching is always an adventure. Will anyone come to listen, will they be friendly, how long will they stay, will the address carefully prepared overnight be suitable, or shall we have to improvise something much simpler on the spur of the moment ?

But we are already at the village, and thought must be exchanged for action. The people are just beginning to stir out of their homes in the dewy morning, wrapping their upper cloths about their heads against the damp. If the village is an outcaste hamlet, we must be very brief ; the people will want to be out in their fields by the time the sun is up. There is just time for a single incident in the life of our Lord, a few words about the protecting care of God and His love for them, a short prayer to commend them to His grace—and they have straggled off in every direction to their work. An hour later, and there will be no one left in the village

but the very old and the very young and the inevitable pariah dogs and fowls.

In the village of the better class people proceedings can be more leisurely, especially if it is the slack season in the fields. We may get a hundred people to listen for an hour or more ; best of all, if it is rainy weather and there is good shelter, a crowd of men may sit and listen to us for as long as we can stay. What are we to say to them ? " The aim of all your preaching is that the people should get a picture of Jesus." It is the dictum of one of the greatest of living missionaries ; but it is not easy to get it put into practice. There is always the temptation to argue, to display knowledge of Hinduism, to threaten, to jest—in fact to do everything but preach the Gospel.

Then there is the great difficulty of making the message intelligible to the people. In India, to express her message, the Church has taken for the most part Sanskrit terms and poured a new content into them. But often the terms are unfamiliar to the simple people —and sometimes they give an utterly wrong impression. Successful preaching to simple people demands long and patient study of their minds and of the thoughts that they can grasp.

Here the elementary school, whether government or mission, is a tremendous ally. Often our audiences consist largely of children. If they are wholly illiterate it is a labour of Sisyphus to get anything into their heads : the faculty of attention has not been developed in even a rudimentary degree ; the habit of

fitting thoughts to words has hardly begun. But let them have been to school for even a year, and the difference is almost miraculous. They listen eagerly, intelligently drinking in every word—provided, of course, that the words are addressed directly to them and not to the grown-ups behind them.

But, do as we will, it is not wholly possible to guard against misconceptions. I sat once just outside a village with an evangelist, talking to a group of men. When we came to speak of the death of Christ, one old man corrected us: Christ did not really die. We were surprised; this is a common Mohammedan objection, but this man was a Hindu. He elucidated; years ago a missionary had come on a horse and explained that Christ did not die, a ram was substituted for Him. Then we understood; the worthy missionary had told the story of the offering of Isaac and explained it as typical of the offering of Christ, and this was the result. Nothing we could say or read from the Scriptures would change the old man's mind.

To-day is market day, so we change our method. From early morning the market has been a scene of steady uproar—bullocks stamping, dogs fighting, buyers and sellers chaffering and quarrelling, children being lost in the crowd and recovered by agitated parents; the whole covered with a haze of fine dust like a pillar of cloud. The time to catch the people is just as they have finished their purchases and are beginning to turn home. They are in a hurry and will not stay long, so we must be brisk, and brief, and to

the point. Two verses of a lyric, then a big picture of some incident in the life of our Lord is displayed, and someone begins to speak. Ten minutes is the maximum time allowed him, then the picture is changed. That crowd melts away and another collects; and so we begin again. The work is exhausting in the extreme; noise and dust combine to fight against us; it is sowing broadcast with a vengeance. But this is not to say that the effort is wasted; I have seen nineteen Gospels sold in an hour in market preaching; and Gospels, when they are bought and not received free, are generally taken home and carefully read.

Here is a very different scene; in the big well-built house of a rich Hindu a small crowd has collected to hear the Gospel sung. By the light of a single hurricane lantern we can make out the figure of the singer, sitting Indian fashion on the ground. He will accompany himself on the violin, and close to him is the drummer who will keep up ceaselessly the rhythm of the song and closely follow every detail of the singer's lead. Chairs have been placed for "the quality" on the veranda; the others stand or squat in the courtyard. The musician strikes up and at once there is a breathless silence. Almost all Indians are passionately fond of music; there are many traditional tunes which are known to all and which are consecrated to various themes and moods. The singer starts with a Sanskrit invocation; and though the hearers cannot understand more than a quarter of the words, they are thrilled with the strong, rolling cadences of the sacred language.

Then the singing proper commences with some general topic—the shortness and hardness of life, the need of a comforter, of a clear spiritual light in the darkness. The singing is interspersed with comment, racy, topical, humorous; but, through all, the singer's mind is intent on one purpose only—to make clear the figure of the Christ. Two or three hours perhaps his listeners will sit spellbound, as he leads them onwards and upwards, and at last leaves them face to face with the Cross. He can lead them quickly back from mirth to seriousness, for India is a land of sudden laughter and quick tears. The stillness deepens as he reaches the most sacred part in that story which will hold all but the most frivolous or the most hostile. If he knows his work and stops just as the climax has been reached, the audience will slip off almost in silence into the night, saying as they go, "We will hear thee again of this matter."

The best times of all are those when the evangelist can get a little group sitting round him and quietly talking. He must not be in haste, but must let the argument drift apparently as it will. For that is India's way. Sometimes it will circle maddeningly round an unprofitable discussion, "fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute"; sometimes at the end of two hours it will go back to the very point at which it started, and all the knots so carefully tied in the meantime will slip. Occasionally there will be anger and high words, but rarely; more often a general apathy and an unwillingness to take any question of

religion seriously. But sometimes the teacher will feel that he has been well rewarded ; he has found the Cornelius waiting to hear the words appointed by God.

But, in the end, more repaying and more fruitful than any set work of regular evangelists is the quiet work of the village Christians themselves. Of the good seed sown by the Sower, only a part fell on good ground, and even of that not all sprung up to bear a hundredfold. But sometimes the word sown does fall on receptive soil and suddenly springs up to harvest. Here a family, there an individual is baptized. What follows ? The event cannot but make a stir in all the community. Every Hindu family has relatives scattered in all parts of the district, and to some extent the affairs of one are the affairs of the whole caste. Marriages mean much coming and going ; trade and markets give opportunities of meeting ; on a journey there are few who cannot find some fellow-caste-man's house in which to lodge for the night. One cannot live long in India without becoming aware of the wonderful secret telegraph, by which news, sometimes including official secrets, is flashed all over the country in apparently a moment of time. So news goes round that Karuppaya of Nedunkulam has ceased to worship the family idol, and talks strange new talk of God and love. Wherever he goes he will be questioned about it ; what has he got out of the change ? If he comes from among the outcastes, that may well be obvious to every observer. While others are dirty and degraded he is clean, does not eat carrion, does not

drink, does not work on Sunday. This last is almost the first thing which strikes the Hindu observer about the Christian, and, like the Roman historian Tacitus, he ascribes it to laziness—" go and join the Way and take a holiday on Sunday " we have heard called after some who showed an inclination to enquire further about Christianity.

Sometimes it is a schoolboy who starts the movement ; if he is the first boy in the village to rise to the height of the mission boarding school, his return from his first term is an event of great interest to the whole village. Not only the children, but even grey-beards will sit at the feet of the infant prodigy, as he expounds his new-found wisdom ; and unaccustomed licence of speech will be allowed him (deep is the veneration of India for learning) as he reads from " the Book " and advises his people, " You all worship idols, but we learn that it is not good to worship idols." Nothing, perhaps, impresses the villager so much as the fact and the habit of prayer. " When did you first begin to pray ? " we asked a young convert, now in his high school course. " My uncle was staying with us," he replied, " and he told me the story of how Daniel was delivered from the den of lions by the power of prayer. From that time, I began to pray by myself." The last two words are important ; it is not easy to abolish the old Hindu idea that prayer is the uttering of charms, that it is the special prerogative of a few people, not to be ventured on by those who do not know the trade.

Here we have the beginnings of that wonderful

phenomenon of modern times, the mass movement. How it comes about, it is impossible to state. In a district where missionaries have been working for fifty or eighty years with little result, suddenly a flame is kindled and leaps from spirit to spirit like a forest fire. Once it has started there is no limit to the extent to which it may spread. A little over ten years ago, a new field was opened up by three catechists who were the representatives of the missionary society of one of the South Indian Churches. The European missionary who went with them was oppressed by the difficulty of their work, and by the weakness of the ill-equipped little team that went in to possess this new land in the name of the Lord. The area had never been trodden before by preachers of the Gospel ; it seemed impossible to look for results ; but the Spirit had been before them, leaping across the unoccupied places from a mass movement further south. At the end of six months a deputation visited the district. " Within half an hour of our arrival, we heard the voices of large numbers of people singing with great enthusiasm . . . we were told . . . that they were coming in for baptism . . . over two hundred people, men, women and children, singing Telugu lyrics, shouting Hallelujah, beating time with the clapping of hands, and some of them dancing with joy." On that one day a hundred and eighty souls were baptized, and the year's record, when the number of workers had been increased to seven, was seven hundred and thirty-one. In ten years' time, from this beginning, had grown a Christian

community of over four thousand, with five thousand six hundred enquirers under instruction attached to it.

This miracle is happening all over India. True, the flame is often far from clear, smoke is more conspicuous than light or heat; yet there is without doubt fire underneath. The outcaste through the length and breadth of the land is beginning to feel that the day of his deliverance has come. For centuries he has been treated as less than the dust. Now, at last, he has found a friend.

Imagine the surprise of the outcaste when for the first time a friendly hand is laid on his shoulder, a kindly voice speaks to him; more marvellous still, when a well-dressed man welcomes him into his home, and, perhaps most wonderful of all, shares his food with him. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold I will set thy stones in fair colours and lay thy foundations with sapphires. . . . And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The glowing colours of the prophet's vision are hardly too bright for the change that has been effected.

It is fairly easy to describe the outward change in the people of the lowest castes who have been brought under the influence of Christianity; their villages are a little cleaner, the idols have gone, there are the beginnings of education, and a certain Christian consciousness of personal dignity. But is there any inner change to correspond? Can we trace the obscure workings of the Spirit, by which the mind of man is

turned away from superstition and sin to the worship of the living God ? Where the subject of the experience is an Augustine or a Bunyan, the world is enriched by immortal literature. But these are poor folks, mostly with but few words to express their daily needs and but little habit of introspection. In trying to learn their inmost minds we are lowering our buckets into a pit of darkness. But something, if not all, we may reasonably hope to draw up.

First, let us remind ourselves that even among the poorer folk of India God has not left Himself without witness. From time to time there have arisen in Hinduism, as in Christianity, reforming movements which have set their faces against idol-worship and against caste-division. When a movement towards Christianity started among the outcaste leather workers in the Telugu field, it was found that many of those who first came and showed themselves most earnest, described themselves as having belonged to the Nasriah sect. It appears that about a hundred years ago a Mohammedan trader learned at the feet of a Hindu *yogi* (mystic) ; and one of his disciples was the founder of this sect. " The *gurus* of the Nasriah sect came to see us and said, ' Don't steal, don't worship idols, don't drink *sarai* (country spirit).' It was a good religion, for they taught us that there is only one God." At the time when the Christian missionaries came, fifty years later, the sect had lost its first purity and had fallen back into idol-worship and immorality ; but to some at least it seems to have been a half-way house

from the degradation of animism to the purer faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The raw villager, hearing the Gospel for the first time, may be said to understand literally nothing of what it is all about. He understands the words ; but there is nothing in his experience with which he can associate them, and therefore the words remain idle in his mind. It may be long before they germinate.

I was talking once to a fine upstanding young man of a hill-tribe in the Madras Presidency, who had worked off and on in the mission compound ever since the mission station had been opened thirteen years before. He told me, " When the *durai* first came here he used to say to me, ' Muttu, you should worship the Lord.' Then I did not understand at all what he meant, but now I understand."[1]

Even when understanding begins to dawn there is no immediate drawing towards the Gospel. For the general attitude of the villager I cannot better the description given by Bishop Caldwell, eighty years ago. He says that few probably of the ignorant people would dispute the truth of Christianity, since it is professed and taught by people who on the whole are so much more learned and clever. " It is very likely to be true, but it is regarded as a truth rather like that of the higher mathematics, very difficult to acquire, and, to the villager, about as useful."

When the figure of Jesus begins to distinguish itself

[1] The honoured fellow-worker here referred to entered into life while this chapter was being written.

amid the dim mists of their comprehension, it is not usually as the gentle Shepherd, not even as the pure and holy, that He appears. He comes to them as the Hero in magic armour to do battle against, and to overthrow, the demon powers of evil—as He appeared long since to St. Paul, according to whom it was "the rulers of this world, the spiritual powers of wickedness in heavenly places" who crucified the Lord of Glory, and in so doing sealed their own doom.

We have seen that the life of the villager is demon-ridden, but Christ is depicted as the conqueror of the demons. One can hardly exaggerate the impression on their minds of the stories of Christ expelling the demons by a word, subjecting them, freeing those whom they had oppressed. We cannot improve on the following passage which is all the more valuable because it was not written by a missionary :

> The Supreme Being who does not protect them [non-Christians] from the spite of malevolent spirits has, they are assured, the Christians under His care. They consider that in consequence of His guardianship, the witches and *bhuts* (spirits) have no power over the Christians, and it is therefore good for them to join that body. They are taught that for the salvation of Christians one great sacrifice has been made, and they see that those who are baptized do not in fact reduce their live-stock to propitiate the evil spirits. They grasp at this notion, and long afterwards, when they understand it better, the atonement, the mystical washing away of sin by the Blood of Christ, is the doctrine on which their simple minds most dwell.[1]

[1] Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 257.

But the evolution which finally results in the overthrow of the evil spirits is often a long, slow business. As soon as a man realizes what is implied in the new preaching, the first consequence is usually violent opposition—not, as among more advanced communities, through a clinging to sin, but from that more primeval instinct of the human mind, intense attachment to custom. Revolutions of thought and philosophy can take place within Hinduism without serious disturbance, because they play over the surface of ancestral custom and leave the deeps untouched. Christianity penetrates far too deep to enter without a struggle even among the lowest and most uncivilized. The accusation against the early Christians was that they "changed the ordinances" and "introduced customs which it is not lawful for us to observe." So long as they clung to the safer ground of doctrines, much less objection was taken. It is the conflict between custom and Christ which is the real crux of the whole situation, and the solution of the conflict is of the most intense interest both to the psychologist and to the believer.

We went one day to visit an old lady, a convert of some five years' standing. A good many of her people had been baptized with a view to "social uplift," but before long, "when the sun had risen with burning heat" the most part had fallen away, having no root, and she had been left almost alone. We asked her to tell us her story. Mariamma had been a childless widow—thus suffering the two most terrible misfortunes which can befall a Hindu woman. Even

though the widow is not ill-treated, the very fountain of her life is dried up. "She had no joy in life" one was told of a young widow, whose body had been found in the compound well. All the time she has the sickening sense that it may have been her sin in another existence which has robbed her husband of his life. So Mariamma had gone on pilgrimage, in search of peace, to those sacred places where the water is so holy that it will wash away sin. She reeled off a list of them, musical-sounding South Indian names—"Rameswaram, Conjeevaram, Madura, Tiruchendur," and then an expressive gesture of the hands, "all except Benares." But somehow peace had not come.

It was about this time that the catechists had first come to her village, but she had resisted them. When they bade her "join 'the Way'" she had replied, "I have taken hold of this, how can I then take hold of that?" (This was illustrated by catching hold with one hand of one twig of the tree under which we were standing, and another twig with the other hand.)

Indeed, it must have seemed hard to give up all that painfully accumulated merit to try a new and uncertain pilgrimage. The matter had been decided for her by a dream. She had seen one of the catechists coming to her and saying, "Why do you resist? What we tell you is true." After that she had yielded and believed and been baptized. "Do you not feel tempted sometimes," we asked her, "to go back to Hinduism as others have done?" "Never," she replied with determination. "See, I have clung to Him as this creeper

clings to this tree. I will never leave Him; even if He should leave me, I would never leave Him."

Often decision for Christ is preceded by a period of intense and prolonged conflict. This sometimes takes the form, as in the following curious example, of a challenge to Christ and the demons to match and prove their power.

A devotee of the terrible goddess Devi, who had learned various magic rites and believed himself to be possessed of magic powers, had come under the influence of Christian teaching, and was much attached to the Way. One night he was heard shouting and singing in his room with such vehemence that his neighbours were not able to get a wink of sleep and concluded that he must be mad. It transpired later what he had been doing. He had set the image of Devi on the one side and the Bible on the other, and invoked Devi, if she was greater than the God of the Bible, to give him a sign. . . . He continued shouting and praying with ever-increasing intensity, cutting his fingers and sprinkling his blood on the image of Devi till morning dawned. As no sign had been given, he concluded that Devi had been conquered. From that time he gave up his idols and devoted himself wholly to the worship of the true God.

But even when the great decision has been made, there is often a slip between belief and baptism. Especially among simple and illiterate people, some period of probation is necessary. One of the most difficult problems of the village missionary is to decide at what point baptism should be administered. One party stands out for the purity of the Church and insists that none should be baptized who have not

given evidence of some real faith and change of heart. But this involves the risk of losing some enquirers altogether, if the catechumenate is unduly prolonged. Another school says, "Baptize at once any who are ready to become Christian. You will have the chance of teaching them, or at least of teaching their children." This is the method universally adopted by the Romans. How does each method work out in practice? We have an invaluable piece of information from an acute observer, who is not a missionary but a trained student of religions.

I asked three missionaries how in their opinions the second generation of converts compared with the first. One of them said that the second generation was much better than the first; the two others said that in the case of the better class of Indians, Christians of the second generation are decidedly inferior spiritually and morally to their parents. This, in the opinion of the missionaries, is due to the fact that children of Indian Christians have no strong convictions of their own, have never been called upon to go through persecutions for their faith, and hence take it as a matter of course and as a rather external thing. A fourth missionary to whom I put the same question was more hopeful; the second and third generations, he admitted, were religiously and spiritually inferior to the first. They lack certain elements of value which come from suffering for the faith. But morally, he insisted, they exhibited a real and undeniable advance upon their parents and grand-parents.[1]

[1] J. B. Pratt, *India and its Faiths*, 1915, pp. 444-5. He adds the note, "It is perhaps significant that the first of these three missionaries was a Roman Catholic and the two others were Evangelical Protestants."

The period of catechumenate is full of perils, and there are likely to be many to put hindrances in the convert's way. Sometimes temptation and trickery and even drugs are used to lead the seeker into sin so dire that he will never be able to lift up his head again in the Christian community. There are, too, the seasons of dryness and coldness with which even the most experienced Christian has to contend, when resolution trickles away and perseverance faints in the heat of temptation.

The following letter, written by one enquirer to another who had fallen away from his first love, is still valuable, though written many years ago, since the village convert seldom rises to such a height of articulate expression :

I hope to go to N. soon, but the prospect of going there gives me no pleasure because you, my dear brother, leaving the straight path, have turned back again. . . . You know that what we got last year we got by prayer. You know how every morning we prayed in Makkar Shah's grove, and by what winding paths and with what difficulty we used to go to the mission house and to the bridge, and you know what we used to talk about then. Did we do evil ? . . . I am always praying that God would be with you and deliver you from Satan's bondage. I am greatly distressed that you showed me the way I should walk in, you lighted my lamp, and your own lamp is gone out.

Last and saddest is the hindrance caused to many by the lives of Christians. Converts and enquirers, when they are real, have high, even puritanical standards,

and they are shocked by much which would pass unnoticed among Hindus, but which stands out black and shameful against the purity of Christ.

Not all who decide for Christ come to the point of baptism. There are some who fall away, and some to whom opportunity is denied. No woman missionary in India but knows of secret believers among the women. Scattered all over India there must be thousands of them. If the Son of Man were to walk through India in visible form to seek His own, those who followed Him would be led through strange places, to find hands of supplication lifted from many barred and shuttered rooms. In the day of the general resurrection, many saints and martyrs will arise from unknown and unconsecrated graves.

CHAPTER IV

Improving the Village

INDIA is in every respect a land of violent contrasts. Here are to be found a large number of the world's richest men, and an immense number of its poorest.

The operations of the agriculturist, and the government revenue which depends upon them, have been well described as a "gamble in rain." Over seventy per cent of the population depends directly on the land, and lives with only the chance of a favourable monsoon and good rains between it and starvation.

Sometimes, at the season when great rain-clouds should be banking up from the sea, the sky may be bright and cloudless. As day follows day, there will be many anxious glances skywards, and many heavy hearts. If the rain fails again in the following year, it is sheer disaster: first scarcity is declared, and then famine; panic follows, and often brings pestilence in its train. Worse even than the physical suffering is the moral degradation which nearly always results. In 1920, when a native state was suffering from famine, it was recorded that "Mohammedans took advantage of the situation, and a regular trade in boys and girls began (partly at least) for immoral purposes. Rather than

see their children starve, and to obtain a living for themselves, some of the Christians sold their children secretly, and before we were aware of the fact, twenty children had been sold."

It is impossible to exaggerate the horrors of a famine in the old days ; it was no uncommon thing for a third of the population of a district to be swept away in two or three years. Now, an elaborate system of famine relief is put into operation the moment scarcity is declared ; food is rushed to the needy area, and work is provided in order that the sufferers may earn their keep. It is calculated that the turn of the individual to suffer comes about once only in fifty years. Yet famine is a spectre never far below the horizon in any part of India ; the main need of the village can be expressed in two words, " More food."

The really serious factor is that though India, with balanced budgets and a small national debt, has steadily been growing in wealth and stability, there is some evidence that the lot of the villager is actually harder than it was. The population increased by a hundred and twelve millions in the fifty years up to 1921 (Census Report). The three natural means by which a population is kept stationary are war, famine, and pestilence ; it has been the work of the British government to eliminate the first, to mitigate the second, and to make at least a beginning in checking the third ; and to-day the population is increasing more rapidly than ever before. The rate of production has barely kept pace, and it is possible that there was

more food in the village fifty years ago than there is to-day.

The obvious remedy for this situation is to cultivate more land. But this is a process which cannot go on indefinitely, and there are signs that the peasant has reached the limits of the land which he can bring under cultivation for himself. It is the supreme service of the British government, by its irrigation works, to have brought a new country almost as large as the whole of England under the plough. Every year, down the great rivers of the Punjab, millions of gallons of water were pouring unused to the sea. The land between them was too high for irrigation, and was lying idle, the haunt only of jackals and jungle tribes and cattle-thieves. One who surveyed it in all its desolation described it as "unrivalled in the world for its combination of the most disagreeable features a landscape is capable of affording." Fifty years ago began the great series of schemes by which the rivers were harnessed and this desert made to blossom as the rose. Hundreds of miles of canals have been dug, millions of tons of food are raised every year, the standard of life in the "Canal Colonies" is the highest in any part of the East. There are still two great works in progress, one on the Indus in Sind, and one on the Cauvery in the South, which when completed will add about another ten thousand square miles to the fields of India; and these will probably be the last. And then?

"Industrialize" says one school of thought at once. India is a land rich in raw materials, which she has

hardly begun to use ; apply brains and mechanical power, and in a generation she will begin to rival the United States. But this is a prospect which the majority of Indian patriots view with horror and alarm. They have seen the appalling conditions in the industrial quarter of Bombay, where the worker, still a villager at heart, stands all day in the over-heated atmosphere of the mill, to return at night to the fetid rabbit-warren of a " chawl," which is all that he has to call home. It is little wonder that one of them recently wrote, " to some of us the remedy seems worse than the disease."

But need industrialism in India appear in this terrible guise of a destroyer of village life and of all the ancient ways ? Our thoughts turn to a great mill in the South, where seventeen hundred hands are employed. It stands in a lovely situation at the foot of the mountains whose streams give water power. The buildings are lofty and well-ventilated ; wages are not very high but they are constant, and amount to more than is earned by many teachers. But the great point is that the workers do not live at the factory but walk in every day from the neighbouring villages. Every night they return to the village atmosphere, and as they splash through the pools of the rainy season can rejoin sons and brothers returning, plough on shoulder, from the fields. We stood one day to preach outside the mill at closing time ; in a few moments we were surrounded by a jostling, laughing, friendly crowd more than a thousand strong. We preached for over an hour ;

at the end of that time, more than half of them were still listening attentively, and many of them walked with us as we returned in the gathering darkness to our camp.

But there is something superficial about both these remedies. If you wish to improve the village, you must first improve the villager. Most striking is the testimony of some who know the Canal Colonies well that, though you can make the villager richer, you cannot make him happier. The same old habits of fecklessness and self-indulgence cling to him, and greater wealth may only mean richer opportunities of harming himself. A sudden increase in possession, which is not the result of character but of chance and a kindly government, solves no old problems and creates many new ones. When all is said and done, the solution of the villager's problems must be found in the ordinary village, and in the end it must be found by the villager himself.

The three great hindrances to prosperity, which the villager himself can largely overcome, *if he will*, are disease, drink and debt.

I. "In Gurgaon," says Mr. Brayne, "when you lose your way, you find your way by your nose; the greater the stink, the nearer the village." What is true of Gurgaon is more or less true of the whole of India. The ordinary village is extremely filthy. For sanitary conveniences, the villagers have their back-yards and the fields; their principal scavenger is the sun—and the pigs. Just outside the village we come

upon a collection of pits about a foot deep in which are piled refuse and manure and garbage of every description ; the wind stirs and carries particles of filth and infection through the village, and into the noses and eyes of the children at their play. Drains are a rarity. In the wet weather, stagnant pools are allowed to collect in the village street to serve as a breeding ground for the death-dealing mosquito.

Inside the houses, darkness and dirt ; windows would provide too ready an access for thieves and evil spirits. Many houses have a little dark inner chamber only to be approached by bending almost double. A sick person is almost certain to be laid in this stifling dungeon ; and here, in the darkest and stuffiest corner of all, the Indian undergoes the most important experience of his life, that of being born. It is no wonder that disease is rampant in the villages. In some parts, malaria is epidemic, and a third of the population is said to be ill all the time. In South India, hookworm, a disease which could be eliminated by the observance of the regulation in Deut. xxiii. 12-14, is almost universal. In the acute stages, the victim may be reduced almost to a bloodless ghost ; but the disease is all the more harmful that, in the early stages, the vast majority of those who are being weakened by it do not know that they are being affected.

But more pathetic than the fact of disease is the complete helplessness of the villager in the presence of it. Most of the common epidemic diseases are very easily treated. If every village could be provided with

a covered well and a pump, even cholera would rapidly become a thing of the past. But when cholera comes, it is the most natural thing in the world for the terrified villagers to cower together in groups, and thus enormously to increase the danger of infection.

So "clean the villages" is a slogan on which all parties can agree, and which requires nothing but the help of the villagers. Here Mr. Gandhi, in precept and in practice, is a great ally. Not long ago some Brahmin and other high-caste boys were found cleaning the steps of a tank, which had become overgrown and slippery and were causing much trouble to the older folk. On being asked what led them to do work which is considered so degrading, they replied, "If Mahatmaji (Mr. Gandhi) can do such work and even clear out his own latrine, why should not we? We are willing to clean out latrines and do any work for the good of others." Two very simple steps would enormously increase the villager's chance of going through life strong and healthy. First, the digging of proper manure pits six feet deep; if the villagers, instead of leaving everything to uneducated village menials, would themselves see to it that all refuse is collected and properly buried at a distance from the village, they would not merely leave God's free air unpolluted, but would find themselves enriched by supplies of the very manure which they need to feed their starving fields. Second, to break windows into all the houses. Light and air are the great enemies of tuberculosis, and of the malaria mosquito, and of all the minor pests that breed in dirt and slay in the dark.

II. *Strong drink is forbidden to high-caste Hindus and to Moslems!* Of course, this prohibition is not universally observed. While these pages were being written, a drunken Mohammedan was sent to jail in Madras for having bitten off the ear of the policeman who told him to move on! Among the poorer classes, from whom the Christian Church is mainly drawn, drink creates a very real problem. Unfortunately, in South India at least drink can be obtained with the greatest of ease. The palmyra and the coconut palm grow in millions all over the countryside; in the season, when the sap is rising, an incision is made in the spathe, and little pots are hung to collect the juice. If lime is placed in the pots, fermentation does not take place; otherwise, the sweet juice very rapidly ferments, and the liquid becomes "toddy." Almost every village has its toddy-shop; the labourer passes it as he comes in from the fields burning with thirst after his long hours of toil, and it requires an almost superhuman measure of self-restraint not to go in. Once inside, he can, of course, drink away in an hour or two far more than a day's wages.

Even among Christians, though the opinion of the Church is strongly against it, drinking is very common. I talked over this matter with a group of young converts from the depressed classes; every one of them admitted to having drunk toddy occasionally since his baptism, and every one of them was quite clear that it is a thing which no Christian ought to do. Unfortunately, Christians do worse things than drink. I once met in

a village where I was camping a young Christian of my acquaintance from another part. I enquired what he was doing, and learned that he and a number of friends had taken the contract for supplying and maintaining toddy shops in that and the neighbouring villages. Thus are we wounded in the house of our friends.

What is the remedy for this evil? At present, the government keeps a fairly strict hold on the traffic: toddy may be only made from certain trees, and these are specially taxed; toddy-shops may not be opened inside village limits, and may not be opened without a government licence. This no doubt keeps down the amount of drink and drunkenness; but it means that a large proportion of the government's revenue is directly derived from the drink evil, and this gives colour to the idea, sedulously propagated by a certain class of politician, that the government encourages drinking, in order to keep up its revenue.[1]

In some areas, any village where the inhabitants are agreed, can vote against having a toddy-shop for a year; and more villages every year are availing themselves of this privilege.

But many people to-day are raising the question of "prohibition." "Why does not the government abolish the toddy-shop altogether?" The question

[1] I have heard of a Mohammedan ruler who was much perplexed by this problem. Drink must be taxed in order to keep down drinking, yet there seemed to be a curse on the money collected in this way. The problem was solved by devoting the money raised by Excise to the road fund, in order that the wages of sin might be trodden underfoot for ever.

was asked by the group of converts referred to above. Apart from the theoretical difficulties which many people feel, the application in India of a law of prohibition would be extremely difficult. Even at present there is a good deal of illicit drinking ; under prohibition this would be enormously increased. I answered my questioners as follows : " When we see ten pots on a palmyra, we know that eight of the pots will be properly limed, but two are quite probably making illicit toddy. If you close all the toddy-shops, it will be worth people's while to risk very heavy fines, and the number of unlimed pots will be increased to four or five." And all agreed that it would be so.

There is no royal road to the solution of the problem of drink. It is part of the general problem of raising the standard of life in the villages. Education will do a great deal ; temperance propaganda in lecture, song and dance, will do something ; but the problem will never really be solved until village life is made in itself so full and interesting that the villager will not be so sorely tempted to seek forgetfulness through the wide-open doors of the tavern.

III. Of all the giants that have to be conquered before the village can be free, debt is the strongest and most deadly. Almost everyone in the village is in debt and no shame is felt on the subject ; in fact, to be heavily in debt almost increases a man's prestige. In many villages there is only one good house, that of the money-lender ; all the others are tumble-down huts.

Almost anything will serve as an excuse for borrowing.

Lavish expenditure on marriages is *de rigueur ;* a man whose whole income is less than thirty rupees a month may have to supply a thousand rupees' worth of jewels with every daughter on her marriage. In seasons of scarcity, the peasant must borrow to keep himself alive, and when the rain falls, he must borrow again to cultivate his fields. The Church has not even begun to observe the teaching of 1 Cor. vi., and litigation is a ruinous source of debt.

Here is an example of the terrible way in which the evil, once it has been started, grows : "In 1896, a landowner of Gurdaspur died, leaving an unpaid debt of Rs. 400. His son accepted liability for the whole amount by a bond, which was thrice renewed, namely, in 1899, 1903 and 1906. In 1909, the debt, which had risen to Rs. 2,700, was repaid by borrowing from another money-lender. A few years later, fifty-six acres were mortgaged to secure the debt, which now amounted to Rs. 5,000, though nothing had been borrowed in the interval."

The really serious thing is the attitude of the peasant. He borrows, not as much as he needs, but as much as he can get ; his credit has risen enormously with the increase in the value of the land, and consequently he can bind himself tighter than ever in the bonds of debt. There is no doubt that the British government has, unintentionally, riveted the fetters of the money-lender on to the poor. In the old days, the money-lender did not dare to go too far ; public opinion kept him in check, and he knew that, if he pressed his bond to an extreme,

he would wake up one dark night to find his money-bags slit, and perhaps have his throat slit as well. Now he has all the forces of law and order behind him, and when Shylock demands his pound of flesh, the government will see that he gets it.

Of all the forces making for the regeneration of the village, none perhaps has had greater success than the Co-operative Movement. It has had as yet only twenty-five years of work in India, and its career has been chequered, outstanding success alternating with dismal failure. But, on the whole, it holds out more prospect than anything else of solving the village problems in the village itself. It does not merely bring in extraneous help ; it attempts to organize the village to help itself. Instead of each man fighting for his own hand, there is created a common interest ; the welfare of all the members is bound up with the welfare of the society. A society which is working well is an embodiment of the Christian principle of " each for all and all for each."

It is in the work of debt redemption that the movement has won its greatest triumphs : a fixed and easy rate of interest, accounts accessible to all, and above all public opinion in favour of regular payment, instead of the trickery and extortions of the money-lender, whose last wish it is that his client should pay off his debts and be free. A money-lender heard that the son of one of his victims was being trained as an Inspector of Co-operative Societies. Knowing the disastrous effect that co-operation would have on his business, he offered

the father an allowance of sixty rupees a month if he would withdraw his son from the co-operative movement.

But there are many other ways in which co-operation is beginning to change the face of the land. The problem with which we started, " more food," cannot be solved by individual effort and without capital. Everything at present has a tendency to be linked together in a vicious circle. It is easy to say that if the peasant would plough six inches deeper, he could double his crop. But deeper ploughing means larger and more expensive bulls to plough with ; larger bulls will require more fodder, and it is difficult enough at present to feed the cattle that there are. Very few peasants have enough capital to risk experiment. It is here that the co-operative society can come in and break the vicious circle. On the one side is the government, with its selected seed and new manures and better implements ; on the other is the peasant who could profit by all these things if they could be brought to him ; the co-operative society must be the intermediary to bring the two together. In the course of the next generation, the small oil engine and pump are certainly going to work a revolution in Indian agriculture ; but it is only through the co-operative credit society that they can be got out to the small holder in the villages.

But, once again, in order to change the village, we must change the villager ; and that is the point of connection between this chapter and missionary work. The Indian peasant is magnificent material : upstanding,

patient, on the whole amazingly cheerful, generally diligent, he has many qualities fitting him to be the backbone of a great nation. The one thing above all others that he needs is a sense of the worth-whileness of life. For centuries, the fierce Indian climate—storm and tempest, drought and earthquake—has passed over him ; war and oppression have borne him down. The fatalism engendered in him by circumstances has been consecrated by religion : " it is the will of God," says Islam ; " it was written on my forehead," says Hinduism. And so the peasant bows his head in stolid resignation and accepts what comes without the thought or hope to change it ; he is content to live as his father lived, and ancestral custom must certainly be for the best. So it has been for centuries. But to-day there are many signs of the stirring of new life in the villages ; not least of these is the message of the Christian Gospel. Christ comes with a message of the worth of every individual man, and with the new thought of God's protecting care. He comes to give to man a new sense of personal dignity in the power of divine sonship, and so a new sense of what is possible and fitting in the life of men. What the peasant needs above all things is hope ; he is beginning to find it in Him who said, " I am come that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly."

CHAPTER V

The Village at School

THE British were not by any means the pioneers of education in India. When they came, they found quite a widespread, though not very efficient, system of village schools already in existence.

Let us look first at one such untouched village school, through the eyes of one who attended it about a hundred years ago. The school was divided into four classes, not as they would be numbered by a prosaic education department, one, two, three and four ; but the floor class, the palmyra leaf class, the plantain leaf class, and the paper class. The little boy began his education at the age of five or six by sitting on the floor and writing with his finger in the clean sand which he renewed and smoothed out every morning. As he became fairly proficient in this art, he would be promoted to writing with a stylus on the smooth palm leaves, and finally to the dignity of real paper. For the first three or four years of the course he would not read at all, but only copy ; the art of reading a printed book would come later, if it came at all. Apart from a little native arithmetic, the great aim of the school was to teach caligraphy, and above all "epistolography." Indians, like all oriental races, are intensely and even embarrassingly

polite; every grade of superiority has its particular honorific and its proper term of address in a letter. Just before this chapter was begun, a Christian schoolboy wrote to me in Tamil, beginning thus : " Turning in the direction of your honour's bright presence, I offer million, yea tens of millions of salutations to the golden lotus-like feet of your divinity." Even from a younger to an elder brother, some such circumlocution is expected, and it takes some training to hit upon just the right turn and degree of respect !

Schools not unlike the Bengali school described above can be found in their hundreds all over India to-day.

Missionaries have been among the pioneers in introducing better methods in village schools. But even missionary education is sometimes lacking in almost everything but the name. Here is a description of the beginnings in a new village :

Our battle is to be lost or won on the mud floor of the teacher's courtyard or under the shade of the nearest tree. The problem is how long each day and for how many days a restless boy will sit there. You cannot be sure of the teacher. She is usually a woman with her attention pretty equally divided between the school, her own children, her cooking pots, and her husband. This represents the smallest circle of her interests, which expands as occasion arises. A low wall is no obstacle to a neighbour's conversation, and if that becomes interesting there is always room inside.

We soon pass beyond such a primitive stage ; but long afterwards, when we have proper buildings and regular inspection, village education is often enough

to make us weep. The school is just four walls and a roof, adorned perhaps with one or two fly-blown pictures, and with a table and a chair for the teacher. Here we find about thirty children, nearly all very young, sitting on the floor, all reading sing-song at the top of their voices, quite unconscious of the fact that any disturbance is going on.

The work is carried on under great difficulties. The teacher is expected to manage and teach from morning to sunset four classes at once : his task is very hard and very monotonous. The temptation is almost overwhelming to go off to his own house for a quiet rest and smoke, and leave the oldest child in charge. A surprise visit by an inspector or missionary is a very unlikely event ; generally news of the visitors will be flashed on well in advance, and when they reach the school, everything will be in proper order, and the teacher dressed up in his best.

All the time the teacher, and those in authority, have to contend with the apathy of the villagers. Education may be good for some people, they think, but not for those who have to earn their living. Ask why the children in any village are not at school, and the answer is almost always the same : they have to mind the sheep and cattle. It is partly true ; " the good shepherd " in India calls up the picture of a diminutive boy with a stick twice his own length standing in the middle of a group of black and brown goats which he is pasturing. But if the parents cared for education, other arrangements could easily be

made. As it is, they are quite callous. When a child is actually in school he may be suddenly summoned by a loud cry : " Heh, Madan, have I and your sister-in-law five hands each that we should mind the baby while we grind the rice ? Come at once." And the unwilling mite has to go off to take his share of the work. It is impossible to secure regular attendance. Almost every month there is some harvest or other, and the children stream out into the fields with their parents to add to the pittance on which the family lives. This partly explains why it is that the vast majority of children in the elementary schools are in the lowest class, and never get beyond it, and why, of those who learn to read, at least forty per cent relapse into illiteracy after they leave school.

But still they are learning something. In spite of all drawbacks, the children, when they can be got to school, are keen to learn and bright as needles. Even a year in school makes an ineffaceable difference to their bearing and intelligence ever after. Government and missions are always trying experiments to get the work better done, and to give the children the best chance they can. In some areas mid-week boarding schools are held, into which all the available children of an area are collected. They go home for each week-end. One mission is trying the experiment of a school in two sessions, one in the early morning and one after dark, teacher and pupils alike being left free to earn their living in the fields during the day. Night schools for the young men are of enormous value in checking

relapse ; those who come are there because they want to learn, and show a seriousness and application which are uncommon among children. One of my happiest experiences in India was a visit to a lonely station, where at night, in the clergyman's compound, the men were learning on the veranda of the school, and the women on the veranda of the parsonage. When lessons were finished, under the brilliant light of the full moon, the girls and young women sang songs and played games which had been taught them by the clergyman's wife, herself a trained and very able teacher. It was " the Indian renaissance " in being.

But change of methods will not really touch the heart of the situation. That can only be done by changing the attitude of the villager, making him see that education is useful and necessary for the life of the village itself. And, in turn, that can only be brought about by so raising the quality of the teachers that they will be living demonstrations of the value of education to the community.

The original aim of missions in village education was simple and definite ; it was to put the word of God in the hands of all their people and to let them read it themselves. This aim was noble, and educationally far more valuable than is often allowed. Knowledge of the Bible is in itself a liberal education in history, poetry, and philosophy.

The Old Testament stories, especially, are exactly suited to the Indian temperament, which loves stories ; they are a most important element in character building

and moral instruction. The older generation of Christians is unanimous in holding that, though government inspection has improved efficiency in many directions, the Bible lesson is not as well taught as it used to be. In the old days it was the main item, now it does not count at all in the government inspection, and is consequently pushed into the background. Incidentally, Bible reading as the aim of education provides an almost perfect safeguard against the relapse of children into illiteracy. A Christian who has even a book of Christian lyrics and carries it regularly to church is very unlikely to lose the capacity to read once it has been acquired.

But it must be admitted that this aim of the early days was narrow and incomplete. The aim which we set before us to-day is that education should be for the service of the community in every aspect of its life. The uplift of the village of which we spoke in a previous chapter depends very largely on the spread of education, of education not merely in the sense of literacy, but as a new attitude to life—courage, self-reliance, initiative, cleanliness, right ambition. The old work could be done by teachers who were very little raised above the general level of village life, by men, indeed, who had never left the village. This new work demands that we should take the teacher out of his village into an atmosphere of strenuous work and discipline, but that we should yet leave him with a love of simple things, and a desire to go back to serve his village.

Almost every rural area has a mission boarding school

which serves as a link between the elementary school and the high school. These schools, especially when a teacher-training class is attached to them, are without exception the most important part of missionary work in India. The majority of our trained teachers spend their most formative years here, and on the character of our trained teachers depend the character and progress of all our village congregations. Instead of being the best equipped, best managed, best cared for part of our work, these schools are frequently the worst. This is the sober and considered opinion of the All-India Conference on Religious Education : " This conference is convinced that the prevailing practice of gathering boys into large boarding schools of the prevailing type has nothing to commend it but its cheapness, whereas the opportunities lost and the positive injury done to the manhood of the church are appalling."[1] These are strong words, but they are not too strong for the situation as it confronts us to-day. This situation has not been intentionally brought about, it has grown up. Missionaries have nearly always been short of funds, and as numbers have increased have been compelled to run up cheap buildings without any regard for grace or beauty, or for anything except economy.

Yet when all has been said against them, the existing schools are a real asset to missions. They are giving us the best material for teachers which at present we can

[1] *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. 2, page 118. The whole report of the All India Conference (pp. 113-152) is worth the close attention of all who are interested in education.

get ; they are the richest vein in the whole of India for conversions from other than the lowest castes. The tragedy is not so much that they are doing little for the advancement of the Kingdom of God as that with the expenditure of more thought and prayer, and a little more in the way of resources, they could do infinitely more.

The newest movement in missionary work is that for recreating these central schools, to make them real centres for the rebuilding and quickening of village life.

The first thing to do is to get rid of the unsightly barrack-like buildings, so unfamiliar to the child, so unlike anything that can be seen in an Indian village. Let us look first at a centre in the South of India, where magnificent work is being carried on among village girls. Some will marry teachers, but most will marry ordinary village labourers, and therefore they must learn how to keep and manage the ordinary village home. Two model cottages have been built, largely by the work of the girls themselves. They are model only in the sense of their scrupulous neatness, in everything else they are just the village home. One has only one room, the other has three little rooms divided by partitions about five feet high. Behind these are the kitchens and store rooms. Each has a little compound, laid out in flower and vegetable gardens. The houses are beautifully kept, whitewashed, swept, and garnished. Batches of girls take it in turn to live in the cottages for a fortnight, and really keep house for themselves with, of course, the help of a teacher and the

superintendent. They have to budget for their expenses, cook their own meals, and do all the work of house and garden. If the budget is badly planned, the money will run short at the end of the fortnight and all will have to go hungry. It is a real experience of life under exactly the right conditions.

In another community, the system has progressed even further. All the girls are divided up into families, living in cottages in Indian style. The great question here is, " What constitutes a family ? " Ought the girls to be all of one age, so as to be companions to one another ? Or should they be graded, like a normal family, from big girls down to tiny babies, to give opportunity for the mutual help and service which is the discipline of family life ? The latter is clearly the right way, yet it is attended with great risks. The little ones may be neglected or bullied, the influence of a single bad girl may be much more disastrous than in the other type of home. In point of fact, everything depends on the efficiency of the superintendence. Children can play at being grown-ups, but they cannot really be grown-ups. They need the constant loving care of one who will always be there to help when needed, yet who will not overpower the children, nor damp their enthusiasm. Such helpers in India are a pearl beyond price. So much so that, in the community of which we are speaking, the two European ladies themselves became " mothers " of families, and lived entirely with the girls. The success of their work may be judged by the remark of one of the girls : " I thought

I should be coming to another prison, but I came and found it an open garden."

But there is yet one crowning stage ; the school can be transformed into a model village. Of course ! It is so obvious. The children will have to live in a village afterwards, so they had better live in a village here. Obvious ! But genius consists in observing the obvious things which no one else had noticed. We shall need almost all the things which an ordinary Indian village has. If we have a hundred boys, we shall need about a dozen or fifteen cottages, a school-house, half a dozen houses for teachers, a church, a post office, a dispensary, field and gardens, and, what hardly any village in India has—a playground. It takes great restraint on the part of the authorities to keep really within the limits of what an Indian village can produce; but straight, broad streets, trim gardens, well-kept houses make an immense difference. We can aim at something which, though not like any existing Indian village, will at least have kept touch with the idea.

The next objective is to develop the spirit of self-help. Here there are two enemies. First, the spirit of dependence, which in many Christian communities in India has been allowed to grow up through generations. The early converts did not wish their children to be educated ; the missionaries were determined that they should be educated, and so they resorted to bribes. Children were given a stipend to come to school, and prizes as well if they came regularly. This practice is

not followed anywhere now, but there is always a plaintive cry from parents for concessions and financial help, and always some insuperable reason against its being refused.

Second, there is the idea ingrained in the Indian mind that to work with the hands is demeaning, whereas to beg is not dishonourable. The wife of a teacher was once asked why she did not keep her house and compound tidy. Her sufficient answer was, "I can read." Nor are the parents pleased at their children being made to work to help to pay their fees; they do not send them to school to learn manual work, which they could do in the village, but geography and English and all kinds of wonderful things which are the high road to government employment!

Every successful community school has, I think, been driven sooner or later to the conclusion that in order to secure the co-operation of the boys or girls, and to develop their self-respect and reliability, it is necessary to pay them a fair wage for the work which they do. Most schools have evolved a policy by which a boy begins to be paid a little as soon as he does real work, and is progressively able to support himself as he becomes older and more skilled. The school takes a certain proportion of his earnings to pay for his board, and the balance he is able to use for himself. Most schools have their own banks and school stores, and some even their own co-operative societies; here another side of the boy's character—attention to detail, accuracy, responsibility—is receiving a splendid chance to develop.

The school shop keeps all the material necessary for school work, note-books, pencils and so forth, and the boy is expected to buy these himself. In one school, the school barber was dismissed, and every boy had either to get another boy to cut his hair for him, or pay the barber himself. After a few months the boys began buying their own clothes, and then the Principal announced that he would pay no more washerman's bills—each boy could wash his own clothes or earn money to pay the washerman. The boys felt keenly this added expense, and finally one of them said pathetically, with tears of real self-pity in his eyes: "I do not know what this is coming to. First we have to buy our pencils and notebooks, then our clothes, then pay the barber, and now we have to take care of our washing. Next we shall have to pay for our food, I suppose. Where will it end?"

We have been talking of the way in which the boys spend their money, but they have not yet earned it. To that aspect we must now turn. What are the aims of manual work in the middle school? They are five:

1. To restore to manual toil the dignity which it must have in the mind of every true student.

2. To relieve the pressure of expenditure on the mission budget.

3. To give to the pupils that training of eye and hand and brain which can be achieved only by manual work.

4. To train teachers in such a way that in their villages they may be able to help those who are earning their living by agriculture or handicrafts.

5. To train artisans who will be able to make a living in their own villages after they leave school.

First and foremost among the industries comes, of course, agriculture. Garden agriculture, the raising of vegetables, can be begun almost without any equipment at all, and the market is secure. The school itself will consume a very large part of the produce, and the sale of the remainder at the nearest market will make sure that the work is kept in close touch with real economic conditions outside. Both teachers and boys come from agricultural communities, and have bred into their marrow an instinctive knowledge of the work of the fields, as it is practised in the village. But a progressive school will not stay long content with market gardening on a small plot of ground. It will aim at raising all the main crops of the area—rice, wheat, millet, and so forth. Then begins the real opportunity of teaching new methods, seed-selection, new methods of planting, new manures, in which the Government Agricultural Department is nearly always willing to help with advice. Farming on this larger scale means ploughing, and ploughing means bullocks; but bullocks are expensive to hire, and our school will probably find itself led on into the purchase of a number of cattle, and a whole range of new problems. Harvests mean carting, and carting means carts. Carts and ploughs need repair, and so we are faced with the necessity for the second of our village industries, carpentry.

It is important that each new industry should arise naturally out of our circumstances, otherwise we are in

danger of losing touch with village conditions, and so achieving something quite different from our real aim. This is to produce craftsmen, who can repair their own cart wheels and ploughs, can make doors and windows and chairs, and the other articles for which there is a market in the villages; who will be skilful and economical workmen, yet who will work on the very simple scale which is all that the conditions of village life permit, with only such improvements in materials and methods as they will be able to maintain after they return to their own homes. It is important that, from the very start, the boys who are learning carpentry should be set to real tasks, to make things that will actually be used. The school will absorb the first efforts of their craft. But what to do with the surplus? As the boys grow more skilful they will produce more, and their work will be useless unless the product of it can be sold.

Here we touch the endless problem of all industrial work in India—markets. The poverty of the villagers means that their purchasing power is extremely low. We can suggest all kinds of industries—weaving, basket-making, net-making, iron work. But, in nearly every case, the village craftsman is already making all the things which are required and for which the villager is willing to pay. The school can make itself to some extent an independent economic unit by growing and making all the things which it requires, but soon the limit of absorption is reached, and the only alternatives seem to be to cease work or fall back on a European

market which is artificial and unreliable. This is a problem which is yet far from solution. But it is to be remembered that if the agricultural and industrial work of a school does not involve the school in actual loss, four out of its five aims are already being achieved, and an income from outside is an extra which may be desirable but will not always be available.

Next among the general aims of the community school is the development of responsibility and leadership. One of the great advantages of the cottage system is that it inevitably means a wide distribution of responsibility, and the opportunity for boys and girls to take the lead in small groups. But there are the general interests of the school to be considered as well. As we have seen, the Indian village regularly has its *panchayat*, or council of elders, and our school village may easily develop the same type of authority. Joint responsibility rather than individual responsibility is congenial to the Indian mind.

Generally it is wise for teachers not to attend the meetings of the school *panchayat*. Its meetings will be rather portentous affairs, since nothing can be done in India without full discussion of the question from every angle ; but nearly always a fair decision will be reached. Several schools report that their *panchayats* are in good working order, and decide questions of discipline and punishment and other matters of considerable importance for the welfare of the school. From one school we hear that the *panchayat* has its own special meeting place, in which it makes and records its decisions, and

" sometimes puts them into execution on the spot." From another, " Certain boys had the habit of being late at morning prayers. Their late coming was distracting to the rest. The *panchayat* decided that each one should carry twenty baskets of dirt by way of road improvement. Since then, these boys are in time."

Finally, the community school, as its name implies, aims at developing a real spirit of service to the community as a whole. Its results will only become apparent in the work of the boys when they have left school and gone back to their villages. But, even now, they are being trained in the ways of service that are open to them. Some schools have regular dispensary work. Not only are the boys themselves treated, but they learn how to treat minor ailments in others. Patients come in from the surrounding villages, and the boys learn simple first-aid in the most practical way by helping to distribute the medicines and tie the bandages. They learn the double lesson of gentleness to those who are in trouble, and the advantage of clean dressings and simple remedies over dirt and the filthy concoctions favoured by the village practitioner.

Here is a group going off after school in the afternoon, in the height of glee, partly at the thought of an outing, partly, we hope, at the prospect of good and useful work which they are going to do in a village three or four miles away. They are carrying a lantern and slides. One of the teachers is going to deliver a temperance lecture interspersed with suitable songs, then the boys

will act a drama of their own composition on the same theme. Many of them are superbly unselfconscious actors, and if the humour is sometimes a little broad, that is what appeals to the village mind. They will not be home till after midnight, but the next day is Saturday, a holiday, and they will have ample opportunity to rest after the excitements of the evening. Here is another rather more sober party going off on a Sunday afternoon to conduct Sunday School in a neighbouring Hindu village, and then to sing and try to collect an audience of grown-ups, as they straggle back from their work in the fields.

But the greatest day of all is that of the fruit and flower show. This has been well advertised in the villages round, and the farmers are just beginning to realize that it is worth their while to attend. They know that they cannot grow such ears of rice or such large vegetables, so they not merely look at the stalls, but walk round the growing plots, asking abstruse questions about the single planting of rice, and green manures, and selected seed for pumpkins, and whether you should plough four times or three times for early millet. They go home with at least some idea in their minds that their great-grandfather has not said the last word in agricultural practice.

To some of those who see the new type of school at work, and read the wonderfully enthusiastic reports of the pioneers, it seems that a new day has dawned in Indian missions. In God's providence it may be so. But the new movement is still in its infancy, and we must

see some of the dragon difficulties in its path which yet have to be faced.

In the first place, the dead weight of tradition is very heavy. A school of the new type can only be successful when it is staffed by Indian teachers who are keen for experiment, adventurous, and ready to take infinite pains. The old method of teaching was much easier, and its results, though limited, were secure. Now the new "Project Method" is spreading all over India. In a word, its aim is to make every lesson grow up naturally out of situations occurring in daily life. Children in the infant class start by building a playhouse; by doing so they learn the elements of mensuration, and must learn to read and write the names of every article which they use, and of every article which they need to buy. Innumerable experiments are being made to speed up the tedious initial process of learning to read. But such a method requires continual inventiveness on the part of the teacher, otherwise the projects become stereotyped, the children are unintelligently pushed through them, and the last state is worse than the first.

Then the work has largely failed if those who have been trained are not able to go back to their villages in fair numbers as artisans and farmers. There is the rub. In India, every craft is the strictest of trade unions, and an outcaste boy who sets up as a village carpenter may find himself fighting the opposition, not merely of one rival, but of the whole carpenter caste, which has its representative in almost every village,

and can stop his every market. Still worse may be the case of the boy who has taken to agriculture. He has no land in his own village; his people have always worked for the landlords, and his duty will be to do the same. The landlord does not want and may not permit new methods and experiment; he may regard it as insolence that a whelp of the depressed classes should presume to teach him how to manage his own fields. It has been very discouraging to find that quite a number of those who have been taught industries have not been able to make their way in their own villages, and have begged to be taken back and trained as teachers.

Nor is the teacher trained under the new methods always successful in transforming his school into a centre of light and leading for the village. He goes out with high ideals, but things look so different when he is confronted with the apathy of parents, and the terrible task of teaching forty "wriggling infants." Unless encouragement and supervision are generous and constant, there is every chance that in the first two years all that he learnt during his training will slip away from him, and the school will fall back into the barbaric chaos in which we found the village school at the beginning of the chapter.

The implication is that the new method is going to be much more expensive than the old. We are trying to give a far better education than before, and it cannot be done with the man power and the money that are at present being expended. As we have seen, a school

which has handicrafts can to some extent help in its own support, though one of the experts gives the serious warning that he does not know of one community school in South India where agriculture is being made to pay.

But it is in man power that the demand is very much greater. To make the new scheme succeed in the villages, every group of twelve or fifteen schools must be put under a supervisor who must be a man of better qualifications than the teachers. Above all, the community school itself demands resourcefulness, strong personality, initiative, perseverance, and, hardest of all, readiness to admit failure. At present, the lead in nearly all these enterprises is being taken by foreign workers, and it is mainly foreign money which is being risked in the new experiments. Until the new ideas are far more fully naturalized in India, and until far more Indians of the highest qualifications find their vocation in the villages, this is bound to be the case. But, according to the old standard, to put a whole-time missionary in charge of one small school of a hundred to a hundred and fifty boys, and let him do nothing else, appears the height of extravagance. Many missionaries are managing, without other European help, high schools of six or eight hundred boys, and doing five or six other things as well. The question is not whether it is extravagant, but whether it is right. European leadership need not be more than a temporary expedient. Indian help will be more and more forthcoming, but, in the intervening period, the demand on

the home churches under this head will be far more exacting than it has ever been before.

We must not end with the impression that Indians are doing nothing themselves. One of the most progressive centres in the whole of India is Dornakal, where the Indian Bishop is developing a Church, which, in the seventeen years of his episcopate, has grown from fifty-two thousand to one hundred and sixty thousand. From the very start the aim has been to teach by practice the honour and glory of work. At the beginning the Bishop himself enforced precept by example, and worked shoulder to shoulder with his boys. Now Dornakal is the pioneer in the new development of co-education. No evil results have followed. Miss Azariah shrewdly writes, " By the time the seniors are separated as full-time workers, the boys and girls know each other's faults, and there is no place for imaginary romance."

The Union Christian College at Alwaye in Travancore is the one college in India which was founded and is managed and largely staffed by Indian Christians. One of the most important of its external activities is the Alwaye Settlement. About a quarter of a mile from the college eleven acres of land have been secured and a community school has been started, to serve in the redemption of the outcastes of Travancore, who are among the poorest and most oppressed in India. There is no European worker ; the teachers are all Indians and mostly graduates of the college nearby. The school has started at the very beginning. Each year a group

of about ten little boys, aged seven or eight, is taken in. At present there are thirty-two and the aim is to keep and train them for ten years. At the end of this time there will be, if all goes well, about a hundred boys in the school. The workers live in conditions of the greatest simplicity with the boys, teaching them, playing with them, eating with them. When we remember that the Syrian Christians of these parts have treated the outcastes as untouchables for a thousand years, the grace and self-sacrifice involved in this daily and hourly contact can only be dimly imagined.

When the boys come, they are usually in very poor physical condition, owing to under-feeding and the insanitary conditions of their homes. After a few weeks of regular food and regular baths the prevalent skin diseases begin to disappear, and they turn into healthy jolly creatures. They are cultivating tapioca and plantains, and other local products which can be easily raised. One or two goats add to the gaiety of the establishment, and plans are being made for poultry farming. The boys come over to the College Chapel for the Malayalam services of the Church to which they belong. On the College Sports Day they had their own special races, and on the College Day came up in their turn to receive their prizes. The applause with which they were greeted showed that they have become a real part of the life of the college. This sharing of a common life and a common service gives good augury of the time when the redemption of India will be recognized as India's own task.

CHAPTER VI

Building on the Foundations

THE Church in India is often spoken of as if it were homogeneous, and it requires a mental effort to remember that the Church is to be found in India in every stage of childhood, progress, and decay.

In one village, almost the whole population has been Christian for generations. For fifty years, missionaries lived and worked in the big, ugly bungalow, and left behind them a large, Gothic church, capable of seating the whole village with room to spare, useful but distressingly English. When they withdrew, their work was carried on by a succession of exceptionally able and devoted Indian clergymen. Every child in the village goes to school. There is hardly a soul who cannot read and write; even the women bring their Bibles to Church, and, by the rapidity with which they turn to the preacher's references, give evidence that this is not a mere form. It is no uncommon thing to find twenty to thirty adults at the daily evening service, and at the service held at 4 a.m. on the Great Festivals there will hardly be one absent. This is not by any means to say that they are all perfect, but in the course of three generations they have to some extent developed that

last fruit of Christian grace—a Christian conscience and a Christian public opinion.

About twenty miles away from this village the following conversation took place between a missionary and a young man.

"You are a Christian ?"
"Yes."
"Are there any other Christians in your village ?"
"No, there used to be, but they have all moved to another village ten miles away."
"Do you ever go to church ?"
"No, it is too far ; the catechist sometimes comes in and prays on his round."
"Who are there in the house ?"
"My mother and my two sisters and myself."
"Can any of you read ?"
"No."
"Can you repeat the Lord's prayer ?"
"No."
"Can you tell me of any miracle which Jesus did ?"
"I don't know."
"Do you know anything ?"
"No."

It is not in one district only that such depths of ignorance can be found. Fifteen hundred miles away, a woman missionary went out to try to encourage some of the village Christian women to come in to the central service on Christmas Day.

"Do any of you know what day Thursday is ?" she began.
"Oh ! yes," they cried out, "it is the Great Day."
"What is the Great Day ?"
"The day on which we rejoice and are glad."

"Yes, but why do you rejoice, and why are you specially glad?"

"Because it is the Great Day."

Further enquiry revealed the fact that though they had heard of Jesus Christ, they did not know who He was, nor what He had done for them.

We have tried in a previous chapter to trace the course of a convert up to his baptism, and there is an ineradicable tendency in the minds of home supporters to think that that is the end of the story, the "and lived happily ever after" at the end of the traditional fairy tale. But baptism, like marriage, is usually the beginning of the tug-of-war. Whether the converts come singly or in groups, the most critical time in their whole history is the first three years after baptism.

When the convert comes singly, as the first Christian of his family or village, he is faced with the alternative either of being wholly cut off from his family and all his traditions, or else of continuing to live in a Hindu house, and either is likely to be disastrous. In high-caste families which are still fully orthodox, the funeral rites are performed for a man who is baptized, and he becomes as one dead. To the Indian, clinging and affectionate, the conflict is terrific; to lose his family is to lose half his being, the prospect is as melancholy as the fields of stubble after harvest.[1] But worse than

[1] This is not universally true. When a high-caste enquirer comes, there are three questions that must be satisfactorily answered: "Have you quarrelled with your father?" "Whom do you wish to marry?" "Do you wish to be educated?" There are very few who manage to leap all these hurdles. The village missionary's most besetting temptation is cynicism.

this ; he not merely loses what he had, but enters on a period of dependence on others, which may easily prove degrading. If he is educated, and can soon earn his own living, the period of pupilage is short, and he can recover his self-respect by repaying what has been spent on him.

But there is a far more difficult case than this. A young caste man comes to be baptized. He can read and write, but is not sufficiently educated to be trained as a teacher, and he is too old to be put back to school. He has never done any work except to supervise coolies on his father's land and he is too old to learn a trade. What in the world is to be done with him ? The old solution of the problem was to make him an evangelist, and, on a first showing, it was a very good one. The high-caste preacher is often acceptable where a low-caste man would be driven out of the street. He has given up much for his profession, and therefore probably has real religious experience and a message. The answer is given by the tragic figure which these men present in middle life. Their qualifications are miserable, their salary a mere pittance, they have no hope of rising to anything better, their spirituality has long since dripped away from them at the rate of two sermons a day.[1] They are the jetsam of the mission.

" Why," says the English reader, " instead of cutting themselves off like this, do they not continue to live as

[1] This seems to me to be partly due to the fact that whereas our Lord sent His evangelists two and two, missions have generally sent them one by one, which is to ask more than human nature, even fortified by divine grace, can give.

unbaptized Christians among their own people ? " The answer is in the attitude of Hindu or Mohammedan to baptism. In Hinduism you can believe what you like as long as you outwardly conform, but the moment you are baptized, you are an alien and an outcaste. Inevitably the enquirer comes to the moment when he is faced with the terrible words : " If a man love father and mother more than Me . . ." Missionaries have in the past done harm by urging men to be baptized before they are ready. " The missionaries do not know what they are asking of us," cried a student caught in the grip of this fearful struggle. It is true. Even the agonising sympathy of the onlooker is nothing to the desperate plight of the wrestler with the waves. But woe to that man who would fool the enquirer by hiding the fact that Christ came into the world to bring not peace but a sword !

The fate of the man of middle-caste who can continue to live in his own house is outwardly much happier, but spiritually far more perilous. There is the perpetual temptation to adjustment, to compromise, to hide the light under a bushel. A newly baptized convert came to me with a problem. " In my house at certain seasons all the cooking pots are broken, and, when the first rice is cooked in the new pots, a portion is first offered to the household gods, and then the family eats. Can I eat with them ? " Suddenly 1 Cor. viii. became illumined with a light brighter than that of all the learned commentaries. I would not answer, but sent him to an older convert of the same caste. The answer

came as I expected, almost, though I think unconsciously, in the words of St. Paul: "No, you cannot eat. It means nothing to us, but to the Hindus it will be a triumph if they can get us to eat food offered to their gods. I ask my mother on those days to give me plantains and sugar, and I eat separately." This is one single instance of the perpetual dropping of water that wears away a stone. The Christian may win his relations, but he is one and they are many, and it is at least as probable that he may lose his faith, or at least drift away from his first love.

Another passage of Scripture which is constantly brought to our minds is the concluding chapter of Nehemiah on the problem of mixed marriages. Throughout India you do not marry whom you like but whom you must. In many castes you must, if possible, marry your father's sister's daughter (but you may not in any circumstances marry your father's *brother's* daughter, who is reckoned your own sister). In others, you marry your own elder sister's daughter. The practice is tied up with all kinds of questions about property and succession.

Now the right girl for a young Christian to marry may be a Hindu, and, if the parents are not Christian, almost unbearable pressure will be brought to bear on him to marry her according to Hindu rites. If he does so, he will be excommunicated, and will probably drift away from the Church. An Indian clergyman moving to a new pastorate found out that the leading member of his congregation had been married for forty years,

but had never been married according to Christian rites. What was he to do ?[1] All too often, to satisfy the law of the Church, the girl is taught the absolute minimum necessary and baptized out of hand. Sometimes she is absorbed into the life of the Church, but often she brings in with her all her heathen superstitions, and the children grow up to speak a mixed speech, like that which aroused the wrath of the good Nehemiah in Jerusalem.

Where large groups and whole villages swarm into the Christian Church together, their troubles are different, but still very real. Missionaries are not, as a class, superstitious, but there is fairly general agreement on the principle : " If you have a baptism, look out for squalls ! " It seems as though hell were stirred to its foundations to overwhelm the light with darkness. Over and over again, we have heard and read that a baptism has been followed by sickness or disaster to cattle and crops or sudden death. To the simple minds of those accustomed to ascribe every event to supernatural agency, the inference is irresistible. The spirits are angry with those who have molested them, and are taking their toll of victims. Faith is strained to the uttermost and sometimes fails. In 1920, severe famine was followed by cholera. In a certain village, a great sacrifice to the cholera goddess was arranged, and strong pressure was brought to bear upon the Christians

[1] The marriage of Hindus is recognized as valid by the Church, and they are not remarried upon baptism. But a Christian who has made a marriage by Hindu rites must be Christianly married to his wife before he can be restored to Church fellowship.

to join in. Every member of the baptized community took part. "A large number of buffaloes, goats and fowls were slaughtered, and the place ran with blood and liquor." In this particular case the triumph of evil was short-lived; the Christian authorities rushed to the spot, and "the offenders accepted the heavy penalty which was laid upon them, and fell at the feet of their leaders with tears and penitence."

But it is not merely mysterious and unseen foes, it is often very visible and human ones, who dog the footsteps of the new Christians with a malignant watchfulness. The landless labourers, from among whom so many of the Christians are drawn, are almost helpless in the power of their landlords. If a landlord sets himself deliberately to ruin a church, it is impossible, humanly speaking, that he should fail. Persecution is possible along a number of different routes. The life of the teacher can be made a burden to him by petty insults and affronts until he can stand it no longer and runs away. Women are frightened as they go to and fro to draw water. Christians are pestered to pay the village tax to the idol-shrine, and, if they will not pay, the washerman is forbidden to come to their house. This is not so much an inconvenience (the peasant can generally make a good task of washing his own clothes) as a public indignity. Stray members of the congregation can be waylaid and beaten.

Economic pressure, too, can easily be brought to bear, for their only means of livelihood is to work in their masters' fields. If the masters refuse to give them

work, what can they do ? If chance favours them, they may get taken on as road or railway coolies. Otherwise they must either starve, or the men must go overseas or to the hills in search of work—and leave their womenfolk unprotected at the mercy of their enemies.

Sometimes persecution becomes very violent. Not long ago, in one village, a respectable caste man who was then only an enquirer was tied up to a post by order of the head-man of the village, and publicly beaten by an outcaste with a sandal—the most awful degradation which can be inflicted on an Indian. In another village, the head-man decided to have no Christians in the place, and ordered the whole community to pack up their traps and go. "They gathered together all their movable property . . . and, determined that the people should know their faith in Jesus, spent the night in singing hymns of praise."[1] It is sometimes possible to secure government aid for the victims of oppression, but quite severe persecution can be carried on within the limits of the law, and the missionary does not wish to give the idea that one of the advantages of becoming a Christian is to secure missionary aid in dealing with landlords. Generally, the Christians have to endure until better days come, and the landlords are convinced that they are too firm in their faith to be shaken by either fear or favour.

The worst enemies, however, are always those within —time, and inbred character handed on from generations

[1] This incident took place in a native state. I do not think it would have been possible in British India.

of heathen ancestors. The Christians start with a new and joyful enthusiasm for the freedom of the Gospel; they have broken with idol-worship and the fear of demons, and with the worst of heathen customs. But they are still the veriest babes in Christ. We have already seen how in times of crisis the thread of faith is sometimes snapped. Much more devastating is the slow steady friction of the heathen environment. It is very strange that in village after village, and area after area, the mass movement reaches its high water mark and then dies away. These figures may be taken as typical of many villages :

Year.	*Adult Baptisms.*	
1921	16	
1923	37	(Dedication of Church)
1924	21	
1925	7	
1926		(Children only)
1927		(Children only)

That is to say, out of a hundred families between thirty and forty have accepted the faith, and sixty have not. The heathens will be firmer in the old ways, for having had the offer of the Gospel and having refused it. The Christians will be weakened by the fact that when they had the opportunity to win the whole village, through slackness or sin the opportunity was lost and did not return. The critical period comes generally between the third and the seventh year after the first baptism, when the congregation is wearied by the conflict of its faith and has not yet " got its second wind."

It is at this stage that the work of the teacher is all-important. He is rather a pathetic figure, as, the last term at the training school over, he sets out to walk to his first cure. He is aged about nineteen, he has as much knowledge of Scripture as a well-taught preparatory schoolboy in England, and as much experience of Christian life as is to be gained in four years in a small mission boarding school and two years in the training school. He will be paid for his services at the rate of sixteen pounds a year, on which he has to feed and clothe himself and half his relatives. He is full of life and fun, but he will never play games again, for he is a man now, and men do not play games.[1] The amount of work which is expected of him is overwhelming. He is to teach thirty children in four classes, from 9 a.m. till nearly sunset, conduct morning and evening prayer for the congregation every day, expounding the evening lesson, to preach twice on a Sunday and perhaps visit outlying homes as well. He is the intermediary between the people and their pastor or missionary, sometimes between the people and the landlord. He may be the only letter writer and letter reader for those who wish to keep in touch with sons and brothers overseas. He gets a magazine once a month, and very occasionally a book. For the first few years, until he marries, he has to be his own cook and housekeeper as well. His

[1] A Bishop once came to take meetings for a large number of clergy and teachers, and among many other good works tried to teach them to play rounders. In India bishops can do no wrong, but it was too much to expect his respectful audience to join in such folly.

position is one which requires great tact. He has a very considerable measure of authority over the congregation, and yet there are men in it who are old enough to be his grandfather whose position must be respected. Any attempt to enforce authority unduly will be bitterly resented, and may set the whole congregation by the ears.

If the trained teacher is a pathetic figure, the untrained is simply tragic, and yet in many areas where the expansion of the Church has been very rapid he is all that is available. Five thousand baptisms in a year may mean a hundred new villages to be cared for, and thirty teachers are all that we can supply. All who have worked in mass movement areas are unanimous in holding that the building up of the Church depends almost wholly on getting a teacher into every congregation as soon as possible after its foundation; nothing can in the same way give stability and firmness. Often there is nothing for it but to get in a group of lads for a few months, teach them as much as possible—a few Bible stories, a few lyrics, a few texts—and then let them go out to teach others as much as they know themselves; there is always the hope of getting them in for proper training later on. Some of these raw lads are utter failures. But many of them prove in the most wonderful way that the treasure of God's spirit, hid even in the most commonplace of earthen vessels, is pure gold.

All the time, one of the heaviest burdens on the headquarters staff is care for the spiritual welfare of

the teachers. Almost every training school now has a summer school to which old students are brought back to renew their youth and knowledge and zeal. The ideal is that every teacher should be brought in to such a school for a month in every two or three years. Part of the time is spent in the study of new methods; elementary education in India is not standing still, and the teacher needs to be kept in touch with the progress that is being made. Part of it will equip him better for the work of Bible teaching and preaching. But a great part of the benefit which he will receive will be just through the meeting of old friends, contact with old teachers and more experienced leaders, the quiet time of prayer and fellowship, the renewal of the vision of the highest. For the time being, he can lay aside the cares of office and become a boy again.

Almost more important than the teacher is the teacher's wife. If the teacher is raw and ignorant, his wife may well be simply an illiterate village girl, married at fifteen, or even less, and with no knowledge of the Christian life but the little that she has seen in her own village. The rule of "men for men and women for women" is very strict in India, and unless the teacher's wife is able to help him by going in and out of the houses of the people, the best half of his work is likely to remain uncared for. In some parts, the rule is under consideration that no teacher who marries an illiterate girl will be continued in employment unless he first sends her for some kind of training.

The idea of summer schools for women is not wholly

new. In one centre we find one of the women missionaries running a summer school for Christian village women. In the busy season, they have to work in the fields like the men, and can do a good ten hours' work for a wage of five annas a day. But in the slack season, if their husbands will permit them, they can be collected for a month or even two months into a "school." Each is provided with a little house, where she can bring her children and her cooking pots and a few other necessaries, and enjoy that little corner of home, which will not leave her feeling too desperately remote and lost from all that is familiar. Even so, for some days she may be too homesick to take any notice of anything and may even run away to her own village. But generally after two or three days she finds friends among the other women and soon will be quite cheerful and at home.

Still, the idea of learning anything is strange—women do not learn, they work. At first it seems as though nothing at all would find its way into their heads, and infinite patience and resourcefulness are needed before seeds of understanding begin to take root. Part of the time will be spent in practical things, the care of homes and babies, the making and care of clothes—this last a matter sadly neglected in many Indian homes. But there is also the daily Bible lesson to be stumbled through, and above all the lyrics which will by slow degrees sing the Gospel into these dim spirits. Even by the end of the month they have grasped only a very little. But at least they have

seen something of the spirit of Christ, and of a good life, from which quarrelling and lying and evil speech have in the main been banished.

Here is another experiment for the uplift of the village folk. We have a great storehouse of power in India in the Christian college students and high school boys, and for the most part we are making very little use of them. At the other end, we have a great need in the boys and young men of the villages, the most neglected part of the congregation in almost every parish in the world. The young teacher deals with the children and the elders, but very often he is a little afraid of the young men of about his own age. Would it not be possible to apply our resources to our need, to use the educated young men to help the uneducated ? The site chosen for the experiment was a disused missionary bungalow with a boarding school in the compound. One missionary and the Indian pastor supervised in the background : the helpers were two college students and three young candidates for the ministry. Eleven young men from half a dozen villages came to be with them and learn. From the first all were one family, eating, sleeping and playing together. Every hour of the day was carefully allocated : a quiet time spent in little groups, talking over prayer and learning how to pray ; a Bible lesson ; practical work—basket-making, netting ; reading lessons ; talks on village life and how to improve it ; lantern lectures and sing-songs. Most of the young men had reached that stage when they could read a book which they already

knew, but when to read and understand something new for themselves was a strange and perilous adventure. At the end of the ten days they may not have learnt very much, but at least the atmosphere had had its effect on them. One after another came to the leader and said : " When we are here, we realize how bad our life in the village is; when we go back we shall try to do better." And the leaders themselves had caught a new vision of fellowship and service. At the end the missionary asked them, " Do you think you could run a camp like this by yourselves another time ? " " I intend to," replied one of the students without hesitation.

We have seen in an earlier chapter what an important part the pilgrimage plays in the religious life of India. Here is the germ of something that can be used for the development of the Christian life. Many churches are now trying the experiment of a Christian *mela* or festival; others have long had something of the same kind in connection with the annual harvest festival. Harvests are going on all the year round in India, so any date can be selected which is convenient to the congregations. The kindly climate makes great gatherings possible without expensive preparations. In a day or two it is possible to erect a vast open shed of poles covered with palm-leaf mats. Of the same material can be constructed little temporary huts, where a family can be quite comfortable for the two or three days of the festival. It is a wonderful sight to look down on the assembled crowd, two or three

thousand strong—the women on one side, their bright coloured *saris* looking like the flowers of an immense and brilliant herbaceous border, the men generally in white, bare above the waist, except for a cloth loosely cast over one shoulder.

The psychological effect is profound. Little scattered groups of Christians suddenly become conscious of the strength of the movement in which they have been caught up. They see themselves as part of a greater whole, they catch their first direct glimpse of the meaning of the words "The Holy Catholic Church." The Indian Christian is not afraid of long meetings if the speaker is to his mind; he will sit for two or three hours on the ground without fatigue and with only occasional intervals of repose. If the *mela* is well organized, there will be many willing workers from the central congregation ready to welcome the newcomers and to see that they have all they need. At the close of each address there will be lynx-eyed personal workers ready to help any whom the speaker's words appear to have touched, seeking to lead them to decision and to fullness of life, and to complete in personal talk and prayer the work which has been begun in the meeting.

All the methods of which we have spoken have involved bringing the Christian villager out of his village, and for his soul's health it is desirable that this should be done once a year at least. But his life is to be lived out in the village and it is necessary to go to him there also. In 1927 a little band of women from a college set out to help the women of a very backward

Christian congregation. There were three missionaries, three Indian teachers, and three students. They taught the children lyrics, and visited all the houses, showed the magic lantern every evening, went abroad to the neighbouring Hindu villages ("They *were* surprised to see us," said one of the Indian teachers in speaking about it afterwards), and in every way appear to have done splendid work. Those who went were so fired by their experiences that they determined to go again, and this year, though no missionaries were available, five Indian women set out for a village where there are only three Christian houses. The mission was intended primarily for the Christians, but it seems in the end to have turned the village pretty well upside down. I quote part of the account of the leader among them.

We did not confine ourselves to girls and women only. All visited us. Men were specially good and made no mischief. They listened better than women, and kept order among boys. Our daily programme was full. We got up at four to have our quiet time, and began work at eight. But we had to do everything in the midst of visitors. Some boys slept on our veranda and came in as soon as our front door was open. . . . At four we had games. Girls and young women played inside the room, the boys had outdoor games. It was a great delight and amusement to us all. We laughed a great deal. We found some boys very clever and full of humour. One evening, our school compound being not spacious, we were offered the (temple) ground to hold our games. Men and women gathered round, and they enjoyed themselves very much. After the games, men asked the boys to sing the songs taught to them. They sang "Praise, my soul,

Him that was born at Bethlehem," "Walk, looking unto Jesus," "God the Father is my Shepherd," facing the shrine. It was very comic to me. . . . On two evenings, we had public meetings in the open air. More than three hundred were present and listened quietly for a village. . . . One of us is a convert, baptized in March. She gave a personal testimony, and another mistress told them about the conversion of her parents. . . . We gave away literature freely. In the end there was a great demand for it. Men, young and old, came for it, till we said we had no more left. Some brought notebooks, and asked us to copy out some songs for them. . . . We found the work rather difficult when we had to cater for men and women, boys and girls. We wished for a combined campaign work. There was a scope for personal work also. Even young men were free and natural. We are very cordially invited to go again. We were a great sight to them, so that at the end they remarked: "So many days it has been like a great festival, but when you go, all will be emptiness, the whole village will be like a house where a girl baby has been born."

One of the most important aspects of building up is the development of responsibility and leadership in the village people themselves. So far, we have been speaking of what can be given from without. But if too much is given, the result will be weakness and not strength. It is important that there should be a teacher in every village, but if the teacher is allowed to usurp all the functions of the congregation, the Christians will never grow to manhood.

The teacher cannot always be in the village, and in every congregation there ought to be a group of elders

who can conduct the service if need be, and address a word of exhortation to their fellow-Christians. In some churches the custom holds of appointing a council of elders in every congregation, as soon after its formation as possible. This is wholly in accordance with the Indian mind and Indian custom. The duties of village Christian elders will not be very many, but they may be very important. They should sit on the acceptance of candidates for baptism ; they know, if anyone, the real life of the applicant in every detail, and can tell whether there has been any real change of heart. Then there are quarrels to be settled, and perhaps the management of local church finance.

On no sides do the infant churches need more careful and patient building up than in finance and self-support. When we consider their poverty, it seems bitter irony to speak of self-support. Some of the outcaste Christians only get one good meal in two days in the scarce season. Out of the depths of this poverty we expect them to give something for aims they can only dimly understand. They are willing to give their labour ; if a church is to be built, the able-bodied men of the congregation nearly always rally round and work without wages. But after that they cannot understand the need of giving any more. It has become second nature to them to beg, and if their request is refused, it must be due to the hard-heartedness of the authorities, not to lack of money (who ever heard of Europeans being short of money ?) still less to a genuine desire for their welfare. It is hard, too, for

the missionary to refuse. He is eager to see the work go forward quickly and well, and there is a heart-warming satisfaction in the dispensing of charity to others, especially when it costs much to oneself.

But the question is vital. A church which does not learn to give in the early stages will never learn to give at all. A church which does not give will never have true life in it. The principle must always be, never to do anything for people which they can do for themselves. But the process of leading them on must be gradually and carefully carried out. Many of the people rarely touch money, but all have something that they can give. In many homes there is hung up "God's bag." As the housewife puts on the rice or millet to boil for the family she takes out a handful extra for "God's bag." At the moment it is not missed, but after many days the bag is filled, and there is a substantial offering ready—very small in financial value, yet with the blessing of the widow's mite upon it. Others give to God a certain hen, and all the eggs which the hen lays become His property. Others again bring up a goat or a calf, which is then blessed and sold by auction at the harvest festival. Where all the lands of a village are held in common by all the householders, it is possible to set aside one field as God's field, all the produce being sold for the good of the church. When the farmers' fields are richly stored, they automatically render to God a due proportion of that which He has given them.

But the only way certainly to ensure the spiritual

life of the Church is to lead it out into direct evangelistic work. The most successful of recent attempts is that which has been carried out in the hardest field in India, the north-west frontier. The Christians there are nearly all immigrants, not local born. They have been swept along in the trail of the army and for the most part are of the very lowest origin, sweepers, horseboys, and the like. The people of the land are haughty, military Moslems, trained from their infancy to spit at the name of Christ. Never was frailer David matched with more overwhelming Goliath. The missionaries had never taken seriously the idea that these poor ignorant folk could be used for evangelistic work, but it seems that once again God had elected to use the base things of the world, and things that are despised, to bring to naught the things that are mighty. The outcaste sweeper has been used, to some extent at least, for the solution of a problem which had baffled for years the best and ablest missionaries on the frontier. Such ignorant people could not teach or preach, but they could at least sell books. The first thing was to encourage and hearten them. Meetings and conventions were held, processions of witness were organized in the main centres, in which the Christians were asked to take part, and give at least silent testimony to Christ. Then the campaign began. All who were willing were asked to take a certain number of books to sell. Some were sold to British Tommies, many to Moslems. In all the main towns, street and bazaar preaching was part of the order of battle. The

result was that the number of Moslem enquirers suddenly leaped up. In almost every case the first interest could be traced back to a Gospel bought from one of these sweeper Christians.

But evangelistic work is not, after all, a matter of preaching, or of selling books. It is the magnetic attraction of a life well lived. The measure of a church's evangelistic activity is not the number of addresses given, the number of Gospels sold. It is the total impact of the whole life of the church on the whole non-Christian community by which it is surrounded. When the inner life of the church is true and holy, when Christ is exalted in every heart, it cannot be long before His servants look round on the multitudes that live without and are moved with compassion, even as He was, because they are as sheep without a shepherd.

CHAPTER VII

The Challenge of the Present Hour

THE missionary task of the nineteenth century in India was the creation of Christian outposts throughout the length and breadth of the country. The task of the twentieth century is to link these outposts together into a firm occupation of every part of India. The heart of the problem is the two hundred and forty million "caste"[1] people in the villages; the citadel of Hinduism has not been stormed till they have been won.

It is exactly a hundred years since Alexander Duff founded what is now the Scottish Churches College in Calcutta, and thereby determined the main trend of mission policy for those hundred years. At that same time government was making up its mind to open the doors of western knowledge to the educated classes in India, in the belief that they would serve as lamp-lighters and carry their knowledge to every class and rank of society. The illiteracy of India to-day is due mainly to the failure of the educated classes to respond

[1] I use this word here because I cannot think of any other under which to group together high-caste Hindus, respectable Mohammedans, and Sikhs.

to the hopes of government and to regard their knowledge as held in trust for the poor and ignorant. Missions, with the same hopes, have tended to bring more and more weight to bear on the cities and on the education of the upper classes in the belief that the knowledge of Christ would filter down from the city to the village, from the Brahmin to the cultivator, and so to the outcaste. This expectation has not been fulfilled. A hundred years of devoted work have not been without their fruit; the whole of the educated class in India is stirring with new life, and many are looking to Jesus for guidance and help; but the villages are for the most part still sunk in the sleep of ages.

The main lines of God's providential working have been strangely different. While the Christian Church has been exhausting itself in direct assaults on the fortress of Hinduism, it seems to be the will of God that the walls of Jericho should fall down at the trampling of innumerable humble feet. It is among the depressed and outcaste that God has flung wide open the door of advance to the Church.

In many parts of India to-day it is no uncommon thing for a missionary to wake up one morning to find waiting on his veranda a deputation from some village of which he has never heard; something like the following conversation will ensue:

"Sir, we wish to be Christians and to be taught."

"That is very good. How and when did you hear the Word?"

" One of us is married in a village where there are people of the Way ; and when he went to fetch his wife, his brother-in-law's wife's nephew, who has joined the Way, came back with him and told us the Way, and the words spoke to our heart. We want you to send a teacher now, and we will take him back with us."

" I am afraid I cannot give you a teacher now. How many are you ? "

" We are sixty families in the village, and seventeen would join the Way."

" Can any of you read ? "

" Sir, are we not all goats and cattle ? How should we read ? But baptize us now, while our hearts are warm, and we will do all that you say."

" No, before you are baptized you must learn. I cannot send you a teacher now, nor next year. There are many villages. But in two years perhaps I may send. You must be patient, and some day I will come and see you myself."

So they go away patiently and wait. Two years become three, three seven, and sometimes even ten, and still the promised teacher has not come. The people may even forsake their idols and begin to call themselves Christians; yet all that they have had are one or two visits from the missionary and occasional preaching from a group of itinerant evangelists. It is no use baptizing ignorant people and leaving them unshepherded. Bitter experience has taught that all the forces we have spoken of in these chapters must be brought to bear if a living Church is to be built up.

In the last decade, nearly a million people have been brought into the Church from among the outcastes.

If the Church had been awake the number might have been twice as great, and the work twice as well done. The mass movements in India are probably the most important happening in Church history since the conversion of the northern nations of Europe nearly a thousand years ago. In this magnificent day of God's opportunity the Church has been half paralysed by her own spiritual weakness.

To-day there are signs that this opportunity, like so many other lost opportunities of the Church, is passing away never to return. For a century Christians have been alone in working for the welfare of the outcaste; to-day this is no longer the case. One of the strangest effects of Christian propaganda in India has been the revival of Hinduism. Many leading Indians are realizing under the influence of Christ that the treatment of the outcastes is a terrible blot on the fair fame of Hinduism; some are beginning with honourable compassion and generosity to work for their uplift. Others are trying to prevent the spread of Christianity by bidding first for the favour of the outcastes, and bidding higher than the Christians in the way of material benefits and service. There is growing up a strong anti-conversion movement, and a regular campaign to win back to Hinduism those who have fallen away. We are familiar with stories of Christian baptism; now let us look at the other side of the picture as we can read it from time to time in our daily papers. Brahmin priests in an outcaste village are a strange sight, and sure evidence that something unusual

is going on. A sacred fire has been kindled. As the priests throw spices and clarified butter into it, it leaps and dances and sparkles. Now they move around it, muttering ancient Sanskrit prayers and spells. This is the ceremony called *Shuddhi* (purification). Some outcastes, unclean by birth, have become doubly unclean by joining the Christians; now by fire and offerings, lustrations and incantations, they are to be purified and brought back to the Hindu fold.

Many of those who have viewed the work of mass movements not unsympathetically have asked whether really in the end they will contribute much to the winning of the whole of India's life. They point out that, owing to the stringency of caste division, it would be possible for all the outcastes in a district to become Christians without the caste people being in any way affected. In many places the effect of mass movements is that Christianity is regarded as a religion "suitable for pariahs and sweepers but not possible for gentlemen." On the other hand, it has been argued that from the New Testament onwards the Church is found to have been recruited from the lowest strata of society—slaves, women, the very poor—and then to have worked its way upwards to the top; it is reasonable to suppose that India will not prove an exception to this general law of the Church's life.

Such a question cannot be decided *a priori*; only experience can answer it. The most important fact in the situation in India to-day is that experience—or shall we not rather say "the voice of God's Spirit?"—

is emphatically giving the answer that, for the winning of caste Hinduism for Christ, the mass movement is the strongest weapon which God has placed in the hands of the Church. Once again, the Church is working upwards from below.

Let us illustrate this new and amazing situation from the annual report of a single mission :[1]

	Baptisms.	
Year.	*Caste.*	*Non-caste.*
1925	—	928
1926	48	838
1927	144	214
1928	564	475

It is important to notice not merely the sensationally rapid increase in the number of caste baptisms, but the fact that in the last year for which the figures are available they have actually exceeded the baptisms among the outcastes.

The movement is not yet India-wide. It is in the Telugu country of the south that this new evidence of God's power has been seen. In that field, from mission after mission comes the same news. "The changed lives of the outcastes have been a far more powerful witness than anything that we could say." It is not one caste only, but many that are being touched.

If this movement spreads from caste to caste, and from district to district, it will be the greatest thing

[1] The Nirmal mission of the South Indian Missionary Society in the Nizam's Dominions), a purely Indian enterprise.

that has ever happened in the history of the Church in India. The outcastes bring into the Church traditions from their centuries of servitude ; the caste people, if they come, will bring in powers of discipline and leadership which as yet we have not seen. But if the movement should spread and grow for a generation, the Church in India would be utterly unready for the instruction and upbuilding of the thousands that would have to be gathered in.

Let us consider at this point the question whether foreign missionaries are still needed in India and whether their number should be increased.

We must be quite clear as to the exact meaning of the question. If it means, " What posts are there for which no Indian has yet been trained or found competent ? ", the answer is " None." There are Indian bishops, Indian principals of colleges, Indian clergy and head masters, Indian doctors, under whom Europeans are proud to serve. Let us put the question in another way. " If all the foreign missionaries were withdrawn, would the Church in India collapse ? " The answer is an emphatic negative. In certain areas collapse would be almost inevitable, in many a certain loss in efficiency would be noticeable for some years. But on the whole, perhaps, the final result would be a great development of Indian leadership, more generous giving in support of the Church, and a general rise in the sense of Christian responsibility and service.

But if the question means, " Is the Church in India, as at present constituted, either with or without the

existing foreign aid, fulfilling or able to fulfil Christ's command to preach the Gospel to every creature ? "—the question is ludicrous. After a century of missionary effort, India is in the main an unoccupied and unevangelized land.

The whole Church of Christ in India, including the Romans, amounts to just over 1.5 per cent of the population. This Church is served by a missionary body of which, at any given moment, the actual force on active service may be placed at about four thousand. To these must be added about an equal number of Indian workers, who are now doing work of the kind formerly undertaken by foreign missionaries. The total missionary force, then, is about eight thousand, or about one in every forty thousand of the population. Remembering that for each member of this force there are, on an average, five subordinate workers—teachers, evangelists, Biblewomen and so forth—we might consider that the missionary occupation of India was fairly comprehensive and complete. But the moment we begin to look a little more closely we become aware of the most serious inadequacies and gaps.

The first and most serious is almost the whole Moslem population, a number larger than the population of the United Kingdom. Moslems are a people apart, and untouched by the general course of mission work. Special work among them is fearfully difficult and unrepaying ; it is not surprising that, though almost every missionary society has Moslem work, we find on almost every page of the recent report issued by

the National Christian Council the refrain that the work is not being seriously tackled. Yet, difficult as it is, the work is not hopeless ; every part of India has records of Moslem converts, many of Moslem martyrs ; and, in any case, this field is part of the general responsibility of the Christian Church.

But it is not only among Moslems that there are large areas which are wholly unoccupied and unreached by the Gospel. The following figures, compiled from the Directory of Christian Missions in India, 1928, are illuminating :

1.	10 districts wholly unoccupied, population about	7,000,000
2.	54 districts virtually unoccupied,[1] population about	56,000,000
3.	Many Native States wholly unoccupied, population about	11,000,000
4.	18 Native States virtually unoccupied,[1] population about	21,000,000
	Total	95,000,000

That is to say, there is in India a population nearly twice the population of England, which has, humanly

[1] It is not easy to define exactly what I mean by a " virtually unoccupied " district or state. I have usually gone on one or more of three criteria :

a. Where only one station has been opened.
b. Where the total number of missionaries is five or under.
c. Where the proportion of missionaries is less than one in one hundred thousand of the population.

speaking, no chance, or only the very remotest chance, of even hearing so much as the name of Christ.

Even in districts which are apparently strongly occupied, it is possible to find many untouched areas. Some years ago a new mission was looking for a field. It found it in a *taluk* (county) of about three hundred thousand people, in the midst of what for a hundred years had been classed as the territory of one of the greatest of English missionary societies. As far as the Gospel is concerned, the new-comers found themselves in practically virgin soil; one of them told me that when he first went out in the villages and mentioned the name of Christ in preaching, the people thought that he was referring to the Hindu god Krishna. Not merely so, this group of missionaries could, if they had the strength, take over the *taluks* to the north and west and east and south, and still find themselves practically pioneers.

Someone may ask, however, are we not told that the evangelization of India is the task, not of the missionary, but of the Indian Church? Unquestionably the horizon to-day is beginning to be radiant with the dawn of a new evangelistic zeal in the Indian Church. We are at Bethel in Travancore amid green, rolling country, sometimes almost reminiscent of England. An English woman is living here in closest fellowship with a group of Indian women, who have dedicated themselves to a life of sacrifice and service. Except for the missionary's salary they receive nothing from England, and are supported only by the gifts and prayers of

the women of the Indian Church. The training of Biblewomen and converts, preaching, a school, a nursery school for the poor Christian children round about—the place is a hive of industry, and all centres in the beautiful, simple prayer-room, where Indian and English are utterly one in Bethel, the house of God.

A hundred and fifty miles away a young Indian deacon is living, with a group of evangelists, under conditions of the greatest simplicity, and ministering to a congregation ten times as rich as himself. His parsonage is a cottage, his church and school a mat-shed. The Christians are a fragment left over from a caste-movement of some years ago, in a caste which is prosperous but socially despised. The movement towards Christianity was the fruit of desire for social uplift, not the desire for God ; and so the Christians had no root, and nearly all fell away from Christ. Now the workers have the hard task of laying again the foundations which were first laid amiss—a hard task, calling for much faith and prayer.

Farther north, we find an *Ashram*, a cloister we might call it, founded by two young doctors, an Indian and a Scot, who aim at showing forth Indian Christianity in an Indian way, under conditions of poverty and simplicity and with the ideal of prayer as the supreme work. Not many have as yet joined them permanently ; but every holiday parties of students go to stay at the *Ashram*, knowing that they will be expected to do any work that is asked of them, even to the

menial tasks about the hospital. They go out into the villages round about to put into practice the ideals of Christ in social redemption, and to try to win the villagers to the faith of Christ by the road of Christian love and service.

These, and many other like enterprises, are full of the most joyful hope for the future, but as yet they are very small stars of light in a very large firmament. The Church in India is as yet small in numbers and weak in resources ; it has an immense task in the bringing of the Gospel to the masses of non-Christians close at hand. To add to these the weight of all the untouched areas, of all the new fields that have to be opened, is to ask far more than its strength can bear. What is to be done ?

I well remember one of the members of the Fraser Commission on village education saying in England, "The line which is being held in India is much too long." It is, in many places ; the missionary occupation is sketchy in the extreme. The line which the Church is holding may be much too long. But it is not a quarter of the line which has been given to it by its Captain to hold. No doubt, by radical concentration the efficiency of the work could be secured, but the primary need, the great challenge of the hour, is for extension. The knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ is the birthright of every one in the world. We are not dealing with the coming of the Kingdom of God in some far-distant future; we are concerned with the people living now, and with the task of bringing

to them what it is their right to know—the truth of God in Christ.

What is the Church's task in India to-day ? In a word, it is the bringing of the Gospel to the villages. The towns of India are proportionately well supplied with missionary workers. Of the thirty great cities of India all except three were occupied by Christian workers before 1860. It is rather startling to learn that in 1928 one-sixth of the whole missionary force in India was concentrated in ten large towns. But there are Christian congregations in many towns where there has been no direct work for Christ. The Christian community has been more affected than any other by the drift from rural to urban life. Even in the smaller towns we are almost certain to find at least one Christian family—a government doctor, a clerk, a board-school teacher, caught up in the vortex of the search for employment and better pay. There are large Christian congregations in all the big cities, but when we trace back we find that almost every Christian family is of village origin. Our old friend the village farmer is called plain Muthu (pearl), his son is Gnanamuthu (pearl of spiritual wisdom), a trained teacher and a likely candidate for the ministry. His son has just joined the mission college, and if he is sober and diligent may go on until he blossoms out as Mr. John Gnanamuthu, B.A., B.L., Vakil of the high court, and keeps a motor car ! *His* son will probably go to Cambridge and become a tennis " blue." There is a steady flow from the village to the towns, there is

practically no flow back. From the missionary point of view, the most obscure sun-baked village of the plains may be a more strategic centre than the great and imposing railway junction.

The greatest danger to the future of the Indian Church lies in the fact that many missionaries and nearly all educated Indian Christians are town-minded. As Indian influence grows stronger in the Churches, power tends to be concentrated more and more in the hands of the educated town dweller. His great interests are higher education and Church organization, and the sore and bitter needs of the unevangelized villages tend to be the last item in a crowded programme.

What are the lines of advance open to the present generation ?

1. *The steady and systematic occupation of all the unoccupied areas within the next thirty years.* It is a terrible thing that when the call of Christ is sounding clearly to advance, the missionary societies should have to send back the answer " Retrench, retrench." At the moment the prospects of advance do not seem very hopeful, yet the call is urgent and imperious. There are two arguments, that from greatest need, and that from greatest opportunity. Let two instances suffice.

A great mass movement is in progress in the Nizam's Dominions, literally thousands are being baptized every year. To the west and north, several districts are completely or almost completely unoccupied. If those districts could be strongly occupied now, it is almost certain that in the next generation the mass movement

would spread to them also, and so a great and glorious harvest would be reaped.

A reliable report informs us that two million people in the villages of Sind are practically untouched. This is serious enough, but there is a pressing and passing factor in the situation. When in a year or two the great Sukkar dam is completed, millions of acres of desert will be brought under cultivation, and something like a million settlers will be brought in to cultivate them. A wise strategy would suggest that the Church should be strongly entrenched before this invasion takes place, in order to welcome the new-comers at a time when service will be most needed and most warmly appreciated, and when opportunities of acceptably presenting the Christian message will be greater than at any later time.

An army cannot march without communications. It is no use sending tiny groups of Christian workers out far in advance of any other Christian forces, leaving them unsupported to toil on for years in the face of ill-health, weariness, and disappointment, and then saying that the land is occupied. A group which goes forward to pioneer in an unreached area should consist of about five or six skilful workers, able to meet the demands of missionary work on the evangelistic, the medical, and the educational side, and reinforcements must be always available for those areas where the work is successful and where large churches begin to be built up. It may be roughly calculated that, in order to complete in outline the missionary occupation of India,

it would be necessary to double the available forces, western and Indian, in the next generation. As time goes on, the Indian proportion will tend to increase, and the western to decrease. But for at least the next thirty years, there will be a clear call for a steady and great increase in the number of European workers. A hundred additional missionaries a year for thirty years is perhaps the figure at which we should aim.

2. *The development of all work on Indian lines, and the making over of control to the Indian Church at the earliest possible moment.* The work of Indianizing the Church has gone on slowly. Everything has been constructed on western lines: bungalows, churches, organization, all bear the impress of the western mind. It is hard for the Indian to take over plans which he did not make, hard for the European to hand over his beloved work to those who will run it differently and perhaps less efficiently. But the transfer of authority and leadership must be made. In some churches very great progress has been made. One missionary told me that he had held four posts, each of which he had been able to hand over to an Indian successor. His last years he expects to spend reorganizing the finance of the mission in such a way that, when he retires, there will be no difficulty in finding an Indian competent to take his place. It is only as this reorganization takes place, and as the Indian Church assumes financial responsibility for the existing work, that the missionary will be able to recover what he has almost wholly lost.

his right place as a pioneer, the spearhead of advance in the unreached and unevangelized parts of India.

3. *An intensive campaign for thirty years to remove the evil of illiteracy in the Church.* In spite of all handicaps, the Christian Church is among the best educated communities in India. In women's education, it stands far above all others. Yet the situation is very far from satisfactory. Of those who are pressing into the Church the vast majority are illiterate. For the older people it is too late to do much, but at all costs the children must be captured and taught. In India, an illiterate church will be a helpless prey to superstition. Primary education for all and secondary education for all who are fit for it must be the motto of the churches. In no province or state in India is more than half the Christian community literate. In the Punjab the figures are at their worst, and over ninety-five per cent of the Church is reckoned as illiterate. The churches are doing a great deal of educational work, but much of it is of no direct benefit at all to the Church itself. Actually the majority of pupils in Christian schools are Hindus and Mohammedans. At the present time the primary duty of the Church is the education of its own children. Perhaps twenty per cent of the Christians in India are able to read and write. It is impossible to cast out the demons of illiteracy entirely in a single generation, but it should be possible to bring the figure up from twenty to eighty per cent.

It is very clear then that the Church in India will

need, at least in this generation, and probably long after as well, the generous service of the best men and women that the West can produce—for medical and professional work, for building up the new type of school in the villages, above all for the hard and lonely work of the pioneer in the untouched areas. What type of man is wanted ? The answer is " every type and the best of every type." Some professional qualifications are usually an advantage, but are not indispensable, and may even be a danger. No man is qualified to be a village missionary who will not be content, if it be necessary, to spend the rest of his life teaching the simplest Gospel to the simplest people. We may add one or two inner qualifications which are indispensable.

(a) The missionary must come determined to make the land of his adoption his home. The village missionary must serve a long apprenticeship of silence, learning the language. In South India, even those who are good at languages have to spend five full years before they really have the freedom of the country, and only those will enter deeply into the minds of the people who are felt to belong in thought and speech to the land which they serve.

(b) The missionary must lay aside before he comes every trace of racial prejudice and pride. He must be willing to be taken for what he is, and not to base his influence or his work on the fortuitous fact that he is a European. He must be prepared at the earliest opportunity to work not merely with but under Indians. In many missions it is now fortunately possible to set the new-comer to

spend part at least of his apprenticeship under the control of an Indian leader. Happy are those who, in this discipline of service, learn the joy of loving and loyal co-operation with Indian fellow-workers.

(c) Those who come to India must come knowing clearly what they have come to do, and what it is that they have to give to India. When we look at the confusion and tragedy of life in the West, we sometimes feel how impossible it is that we should offer our civilization to India. When we look at the divisions and ludicrous imperfections of the western churches, we feel it impossible to offer India our churches. But we do not offer to India either our civilization or our churches, we offer her Christ. As of old, He looks with compassion on the multitudes because they are as sheep without a shepherd; but in thousands of the villages of India, as He walks through them, He is homeless and a wanderer. In old days men were stirred by the terrible thought that all the heathen who did not know Christ would be eternally lost. Now we do not care to pry into an unknown future. But what are we to say of the fate of those who are living in this world without Christ? To the Christian it is clear that if his faith in Christ were taken from him, life would be purposeless, futile, joyless. And what are we to say of the heart of God, yearning over those whom He has redeemed, who as yet have not seen Him in the face of Jesus Christ?

When a man, by constant contemplation of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, finds himself so inflamed with love of God and man that he cannot

bear the thought of any man living and dying without the knowledge of God, he may begin to bear the Cross of Christ. If, as he bears it, this longing for the glory of God and for the salvation of all men becomes so great that it fills all his thoughts and desires, then he has that one thing without which no man can truly be a messenger of Christ. Then, if the Spirit of God so call him, he may take his share in the reconciling of India to God, through the death and risen life of Jesus the Christ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SHORT LIST OF BOOKS
WITH NOTES ON SOME OF THEM BY THE AUTHOR

Most of the books in this list are obtainable from missionary libraries. Those marked * are suitable for more advanced study.

GENERAL AND CHAPTER I

The Indian Village

Village Folk of India. R. H. Boyd. (All Missionary Societies. 1s. 6d. net.)

**India.* Sir Valentine Chirol. (Benn, 15s.)
A very good and impartial account of the recent developments in Indian life. See especially Chapters X and XI.

**Indian Problems in Religion, Education, Politics.* Bishop Whitehead. (Constable, 12s.)

An Uphill Road in India. M. Christlieb. (Allen & Unwin, 6s.)
On the whole the best book about India I have read. An indispensable supplement to this book, which says very little about the special needs of women.

India and Her Peoples. F. D. Walker. (All Missionary Societies, 2s.) Especially Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

The Religion of the Villager

Village Gods of South India. Bishop Whitehead. (Oxford University Press, 6s.)
A pioneer work; the only book in which reliable information on South Indian village religion is easily accessible.

*Article by W. Crooke on *Demons* (*Indian*) in Hastings Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IV, pp. 601-8.
All intending missionaries should read this illuminating piece of work.

The Crown of Hinduism. J. N. Farquhar. (Oxford University Press, 6s.)

India and Her Peoples. F. D. Walker. (All Missionary Societies, 2s.) Especially Chapter VI.

India in the Dark Wood. N. Macnicol. (All Missionary Societies, 2s. 6d.) Especially Chapter II.

CHAPTERS III AND VI

How the Gospel Comes to Them and Building on the Foundations

The current reports of the Missionary Societies will be found most useful and informative. I specially recommend the Annual Reports of the work of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in the Nizam's Dominions.

India in the Dark Wood. N. Macnicol. (All Missionary Societies, 2s. 6d.) Especially Chapter V.

An Uphill Road in India. M. Christlieb. (Allen & Unwin, 6s.)

CHAPTER IV

Improving the Village

The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt. M. L. Darling. (Oxford University Press, 11s. 6d.)
If I could persuade six people to read Darling's book I should feel rewarded for all the labour involved in writing my own book.

The Remaking of Village India. F. L. Brayne. (Oxford University Press, 5s.)

Socrates in an Indian Village. F. L. Brayne. (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.)
This and the above are two delightful accounts of what can be done in an Indian village, by one who has actually done what he describes.

**Labour in India.* J. H. Kelman. (Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d.)

From Field to Factory. Margaret Read. (Student Christian Movement Press, 1s. 6d.)
Good studies of the villages and the growth of industrialism.

CHAPTER V

**The Education of India,* 1830-1924. A. I. Mayhew. (Faber & Faber, 10s. 6d.)
This book is already a classic. It covers a much wider field than that of village education, but it supplies the background against which all problems of village education have to be faced.

Schools with a Message in India. Fleming. (Oxford University Press, 6s.)

Fourteen Experiments in Rural Education. Edited by A. B. Van Doran. (Calcutta : Association Press, Rs. 2.)
The most recent account, giving actual examples, of the new methods and enterprises in religious education.

Village Schools in India. M. Olcott. (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.)

CHAPTER VII

**Directory of Christian Missions in India,* 1928-9. (Scottish Mission Industries Co. Ltd., East Street, Poona, India obtainable from the London Missionary Society.)
See article on this Directory by the present writer in " The Church Overseas " for January, 1930.

India's Outcastes. W. S. Hunt. (Church Missionary Society, 1s. 6d.)

The Christian Mission in relation to Rural Problems. (Vol. VI of the Jerusalem Meeting Reports.) (Oxford University Press, 4s. 6d.)

The Call from India. (Press and Publications Board, Church Assembly, 1s.)

The Christ Seva Sangha (provisional title). J. C. Winslow. (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1s.)
A fuller account of the method of the Christian ashram.

INDEX

A

All-India Conference on Religious Education (*quoted*), 78
Alwaye Settlement, 92-3
Alwaye, Union Christian College, 92
Ashram, Christian, 127-8
Azariah, Miss (*quoted*), 92

B

Baptisms, 54-5
  number of, 103, 122
Bhils, 13-14
British Government in India—
  and debt, 68-9
  drink problem, 66
  irrigation works, 60

C

Caste, 12, 18-20
  dharma, 19
  outcastes, 12-13, 20
  western ideas and, 18-20
Catechumenate, 54-7
Cholera, 64
Church, Indian—
  evangelistic work, 126-8
  finance and self-support, 113-14
  strength of, 124
Churel, 27
Community Schools, 79 *et seq.*
Conversion, 52-5
Converts, difficulties of, 96 *et seq.*
Co-operative Movement, 69-70
Criminal and nomad tribes, 15-16

D

Debt, villagers and, 67-70
  Co-operative Movement, 69-70
  moneylenders, 68-9
Devil-dancers, 28-9
Disease as hindrance to prosperity, 62-4
Dornakal, Bishop of, 92
Drink evil, 65-7
  among Christians, 65-6
  government and, 66
  prohibition, 66-7
Dulha Deo, 26-7

E

Education (*see* Chap. V.)
  aim of missionary, 76-7
  literacy (*see* under *L*)
  mission boarding schools, 77-9
  new experiments in, 79 *et seq.*
  night schools, 75-6
  pre-western village school, 72
  training of teachers (*see* under *T*)
  village schools, 75
Evangelistic work—
  among women, 106-8, 110-12
  appeal to outcastes, 48-50
  baptism, 54-5
  by Indian Church, 126-8
  by Indians on north-west frontier, 115-16
  by village Christians, 45-6
  catechumenate, 54-7
  conversion, 52-5

for the baptized (*see Chap.* VI.)
itinerant preaching, 39-45
mass movements (*see* under *M*)
medical 35-9
singing the Gospel, 43-4

F

Famine, 59
Finance and self-support, 113-14

G

Gandhi, M. K., 20, 64
Gonds, 13

H

Hill tribes, 13-14
Hinduism—
and Christianity, 96, 98, 120-1
devil-dancers, 28-9
fear of evil spirits and ghosts, 24-7
magic, 29-31
nobler elements in, 32-4, 49
omens, 31
orthodox worship, 22-3
pilgrimages, 17, 53
propitiation of gods and demons, 23-7
reform movements, 49-50
Shuddhi, 121
Hookworm, 63

I

Industrialism, 60-2
Irrigation works, Government, 60

J

Jains, 14

L

Languages of India, 35
Literacy, 75, 133
of Christian community, 133

M

Magic, 29-31
Malaria, 63
Marriages—
expenditure on, 68
mixed, 99-100
Mass movements, 47-8, 120, 121-3
Medical mission work, 35-9
Missionaries—
need for and qualifications of, 123 *et seq.*
number in India, 124
Moneylenders, 68-9
Moslem work, neglect of, 124-5
Motor buses, 17-18

O

Omens, 31
Outcastes, 12-13, 119-20
appeal of the Gospel, 48-50

P

Panchayat, village (council of five elders), 10
school, 86-7
Persecution of Christians, 101-2
Pilgrimages—
Christian, 109-110
Hindu, 17, 53
Police, 15
Population of India, 35, 59
caste, 117
Christian, 124
rural, 58

Preaching the Gospel (*see* under evangelistic work)
Prohibition as remedy for drink evil, 66-7

R

Railways, 17
Religion of the villager (*see* Chap. II.)
  belief in Supreme God, 32-3
  difficulty of learning about, 21-2
  nobler elements in, 32-4

S

Santals, 13
Schools (*see* under Education)
Shuddhi, 121
Sitala Devi, 25

T

Teachers, village, 104
  after-care of, 105-6
  training of, 77-9
  untrained, 105
  wives, 106
Toddy, making of, 65
Travel, villagers and, 16-18

U

Unoccupied areas, 125-6

V

Village, description of Indian, 9-12

W

War and village life, The great, 18
Women—
  evangelistic work among, 110-12
  summer schools for, 106-8

SOME BIOGRAPHIES

Francis Xavier: Knight Errant of the Cross.

By EDITH ANNE ROBERTSON.

Cloth, 5s. net; post free 5s. 4d.

The tenth and last volume in the "Modern Series of Missionary Biographies."

In a delightfully written book the author does full justice to the remarkable life and work of this simple and heroic man.

OTHER TITLES IN THE SERIES

Henry Martyn:
Confessor of the Faith.
By CONSTANCE E. PADWICK.

Alexander Duff:
Pioneer of Missionary Education.
By WILLIAM PATON.

François Coillard:
A Wayfaring Man.
By EDWARD SHILLITO.

Robert Morrison:
A Master Builder.
By MARSHALL BROOMHALL.

Robert Moffat:
One of God's Gardeners.
By EDWIN W. SMITH.

William Carey:
Missionary Pioneer and Statesman.
By F. DEAVILLE WALKER.

George Grenfell:
Pioneer in Congo.
By H. L. HEMMENS.

Thomas Birch Freeman:
The Son of an African.
By F. DEAVILLE WALKER.

Tucker of Uganda:
Artist and Apostle.
By ARTHUR P. SHEPHERD.

OTHER BOOKS ON INDIA

INDIA IN THE DARK WOOD

By NICOL MACNICOL, D.Litt., D.D. 2s. 6d. net; post free 2s. 9½d.
"A grave and earnest exposition, by one who speaks with authority."—*Times Literary Supplement.*

INDIA AND HER PEOPLES (revised edition)

By F. D. WALKER. Illustrated. 2s. net; post free 2s. 2½d.
"A faithful and striking impression of Indian life."—*Teachers' Times.*

THE INDIAN OUTLOOK: A Study in the Way of Service

By W. E. S. HOLLAND. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; post free 2s. 9½d.
"What one really wants to know is the opinion of the expert. Here it is—carefully worded, but candidly expressed."—*Aberdeen Press and Journal.*

THE MISSIONARY'S JOB

By GODFREY PHILLIPS. 1s. net; post free 1s. 1½d.
"Apologetic in the best sense—defending missionary work by describing it."—*The New Chronicle.*

VILLAGE FOLK OF INDIA

By R. H. BOYD. 1s. 6d. net; post free 1s. 8d. Illustrated.
Stories of Hindu village folk—where they live—what they believe—how they learn—what they suffer, etc.

MORE YARNS ON INDIA

By S. S. SINGHA and A. P. SHEPHERD. 1s. net; post free 1s. 1d.
Seven stories of present-day Indian Christians, and a final talk on English and Indian Scouts.

AMIYA: A Bengali Girl

By M. M. URQUHART. 1s. net; post free 1s. 1d. Illustrated.
Stories of school and college days, marriage and home life, etc.

GIRLS OF INDIA

By M. H. DEBENHAM. 1s. net; post free 1s. 1d. Illustrated.
An attractive book for reading or study in Girls' Auxiliaries, Clubs, Bible Classes, etc.

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

TALKS ON MODERN INDIA

1s. net; post free 1s. 1d. For leaders of children aged 9-13.

LEARNING ABOUT INDIA

3d. net; post free 3½d. For leaders of children aged 9-13.

IF I LIVED IN INDIA

1s. net; post free 1s. 1d. For the "eleven plus" ages.

ILLUSTRATED GIFT BOOKS

Creatures Great and Small: Stories of India

1s. 6d. net; post free 1s. 7½d. For 7-9 years.

ON THE ROAD: Adventures in India

1s. 6d. net; post free 1s. 7½d. For 7-9 years.

THE BOOK OF AN INDIAN BABY

1s. net; post free 1s. 1d. For 6-8 years.

THE THREE CAMELS: A Story of India

1s. 6d. net; post free 1s. 7½d. For 3-5 years.

Order from any Bookseller or from the Publishers

EDINBURGH HOUSE PRESS, 2 EATON GATE, LONDON, S.W.1